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MEMOIRS

OF THE

DUCHESS D'ABRANTÈS.

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OF THE

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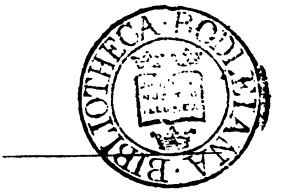

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MEMOIRS

OF THE

DUCHESS D'ABRANTES

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Heroic conduct of a young Polish officer—Baron Strogonoff—General Castaños—The Guerillas—Reflections on the destiny of Napoleon—His marriage with Maria Louisa—Union of the Papal States with France—Change of Government in Venezuela—Our arrival at Valladolid—Junot and Ney—The siege of Astorga—Capitulation of the garrison—Attempts to assassinate Junot—His sentence on the assassin of Lisbon.

WHILST examining and arranging my papers for the publication of the present volume, I happened to light upon an interesting story, recording an extraordinary trait of heroic fortitude on the part of a young Polish officer. I will insert it here, though in observance of the regular order of dates,

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it might more properly have found a place in a preceding portion of these Memoirs.

When Murat was in Madrid, he had occasion to send some dispatches to Junot in Lisbon. These dispatches were of the utmost importance, and all the roads leading from Madrid to the Portuguese capital were covered by guerillas, or by regular troops commanded by officers who had acted an important part in the Spanish revolution, and who thus composed the army of Castaños. Murat mentioned the difficulty to Baron Strogonoff, the Russian ambassador at the court of Spain, who had remained at Madrid. It is well known that at the period here referred to, Russia was the *friend* rather than the ally of France, Baron Strogonoff told the Grand Duke of Berg that he could suggest a plan for the transmission of the dispatches.

"Admiral Siniavin," said the Baron, "is in the port of Lisbon. Send to me one of the most intelligent of your Polish lancers. He shall put on a Russian uniform, and I will give him dispatches for the Admiral; you can give him your instructions verbally, and I will answer for it that all will be right, even though he should be taken twenty times between this and Lisbon. The insurgent army is too anxious to secure our neutrality to be the first to create a ground of rupture."

Murat was delighted with the scheme. He requested the commander in chief of the Polish troops, who, I think was Krasinski, to select for him a brave and intelligent young officer. Two days

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afterwards the Polish commander sent to the Grand Duke, a young man for whom he declared he would answer with his head. He was named Leckinski, and was only eighteen years of age.

The Grand Duke of Berg was not a little astonished to find the young officer manifest the utmost eagerness to undertake an enterprize of no ordinary peril; for in the event of his being discovered, his fate was certain:—and that fate was death. Murat, brave as he himself was, could not refrain from pointing out to Leckinski, the danger he was about to encounter. The young Pole smiled and said: "If your imperial Highness will give me your orders, I will pledge myself to execute the mission. I thank my General for having selected me from among my comrades, every one of whom was emulous of the favour."

The Grand Duke augured well of the young man's courage and intelligence. He gave him his instructions. Baron Strogonoff supplied him with despatches to Admiral Siniavin. The young Pole was equipped in a Russian uniform and set out for Portugal.

During the two first days he pursued his course without molestation; but on the afternoon of the third day, he was attacked by a party of Spanish troops, who unhorsed and disarmed him, and conducted him before the General commanding the military force of the district. Luckily for the adventurous young Pole, that General was Castaños himself.

Leckinski was perfectly aware that he was lost,

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if suspected to be a Frenchman. Consequently he immediately resolved within himself not to utter a syllable of French, and to speak only Russian and German, which latter language he could speak with facility. The angry imprecations of the troops who conducted him to Castaños sufficiently convinced him of the fate that would await him, should he be discovered. The horrible death of General René who, only a few weeks previously had perished in torture for no other offence than that of attempting to join Junot, might well have shaken his fortitude. Death itself may be braved, but to meet it by a refinement of torture is more than the bravest man can contemplate with indifference.

"Who are you?" said Castaños addressing the Pole in French, which he spoke with perfect fluency, having been educated at Sorrèze.

Leckinski looked steadfastly at his interrogator, made a sign, and replied in German, "I do not understand."

Castaños himself understood and spoke German; but apparently not wishing to take an active part in the business, he called one of the officers of his staff, by whom the examination was continued. The young Pole gave his answers alternately in Russian, and in German; and kept himself cautiously on his guard, against dropping a single word of French. He had no easy part to play, for in the little apartment, in which the examination took place, he was pressed upon by a crowd of persons, all thirsting for his blood, and

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manifesting a ferocious eagerness, that he might be found guilty—that is, declared to be a Frenchman.

This furious excitement was encreased by a circumstance which threatened to involve the unfortunate young man in inextricable difficulty. An aide-de-camp of Castaños, (one of those fanatical patriots so numerous in the Spanish war) who from the moment of Leckinski's arrest, had declared him to be a French spy, rushed into the room in which the examination was going on, holding by the arm a peasant dressed in a brown jacket, and high crowned hat, surmounted by a red feather. Having worked his way through the crowd, the officer placed the peasant before the Polish officer.

"Look at that man," said he, "and then inform us, whether he is either a German, or a Russian ....He is a spy, I would swear by my salvation," continued he, stamping his foot furiously on the ground.

The peasant for a few moments, gazed steadfastly at the young Pole....Then his dark eye kindled, and with a bitter expression of fury and hatred, he exclaimed...."*Es un Frances!*.... *Es un Frances!*"

He related that a few weeks previously he had been to Madrid, to convey some hay; having, in common with all the inhabitants of his village, been required to carry forrage to the barracks. "I know this man," continued the peasant, "he is the same to whom I delivered the forrage, and who gave me a receipt for it. I stood beside

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him for nearly an hour, and I know his face well. When I saw him arrive, I said to my comrades that is the French officer to whom I delivered my forrage."

Castaños probably saw the truth; but he was a noble and generous enemy. It was not by wantonly spilling blood, that he wished to cement the edifice of Spanish liberty, which would have risen gloriously and durably, had it been left to the management of such men as himself, Romana, Palafox, etc. Castaños possibly perceived that the prisoner was not a Russian, but he dreaded the cruel treatment, to which he would be exposed if he were discovered to be a Frenchman. He suggested that he should be allowed to continue his journey; but at this a hundred menacing voices were raised.

"But," asked Castaños, "would it be prudent to expose ourselves to the risk of a rupture with Russia, whose neutrality we have so earnestly solicited?"—

"No," replied the officers; "but let it be proved that this man is really a Russian."

Leckinski heard all this, for he understood Spanish. He was led out and locked up in a miserable chamber, which resembled a dungeon, in the most fearful days of the inquisition.

At the moment of his arrest, Leckinski had not tasted food since the afternoon of the preceding day, and when the door of his prison closed upon him, eighteen hours had elapsed since he had partaken of any nourishment. Add to this, the fatigue and anxiety he had suffered in the

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interval, and it cannot be matter of surprise that he threw himself in a state of utter exhaustion, on a mattress which lay on the ground, in one corner of his prison.

He had been asleep about two hours, when the door of the chamber slowly opened, and some one softly approached his couch. A hand was held before the flame of the lamp, to shade the light from his eyes, and when the hand was withdrawn, Leckinski, felt some one tap him on the shoulder; and a sweet toned female voice uttered the words, "*Voulez-vous souper?*"

The young Pole, who was suddenly roused from his slumber, by the glare of light, the contact of the hand and the words of the young female, raised himself on his couch, and with his eyes scarcely open, exclaimed in German! "What do you say?"

"Send him his supper," said Castaños, "on hearing the result of this first trial, and then saddle his horse, and let him continue his journey. He is not a Frenchman. How could he have kept on the mask, when thus taken by surprise? The thing is impossible."

But Castaños did not exercise undivided authority. Leckinski's supper was sent to him, it is true, but he continued in his dungeon till morning. He was then conducted to a place, whence he could see the mutilated bodies of ten Frenchmen, who had been brutally massacred by the peasantry of Truxillo. There, for the space of a whole day, he was left to contemplate death in its most

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horrible form. He was surrounded by snares.... watched by ears and eyes, eager to catch at any unguarded word or gesture. At length, at the expiration of several hours of cruel trial, he was reconducted to his prison, to reflect at leisure on the horror of his situation.

"Gentlemen," said General Castaños to his brother officers, "I am as fully sensible as you of the importance of preventing communication between the different French commanders, at present in Spain; but in the position in which this officer stands, we cannot treat him as a spy, on the mere assertion of a peasant. The man may be mistaken. He may be deceived by a resemblance; and in that case, we should be murderers. That is not the character in which we ought to show ourselves."

It was a cheering relief to Leckinski, to return to his prison. For nearly twelve hours he had before his eyes gibets, and mutilated bodies. Though his mind was haunted by horrid images, and gloomy forebodings, he nevertheless fell into a profound sleep, for exhausted nature demanded repose. Amidst the dead slumber, in which all his senses were lulled, the door again softly opened, a female form approached his couch, and the same sweet voice which had addressed him, on the previous night, said in a half whisper: "Rise, and follow me.... you are saved....your horse is waiting."

At the words, "you are saved;" Leckinski started up, and immediately recovering his

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presence of mind, he replied, as he had before done, in German, by the question, " What do you say ?"

On being informed of the result of this new temptation, Castaños urged his immediate liberation ; but his wish was again overruled.

Leckinski passed another miserable night. At day break next morning he was awakened by four men, one of whom was the peasant who alleged he had seen him at Madrid. They had come to conduct him before a sort of court, composed of the officers of Castaños's staff. They addressed to him the most bitter menaces, but firm in his resolution, he appeared not to understand a word they said.

When arraigned before his judges, he enquired in German for his interpreter. The latter was brought in, and the examination commenced.

He was asked what was the object of his journey, from Madrid to Lisbon. He replied by shewing the despatches from the Russian ambassador to Admiral Siniavin, and his passport : but for the unfortunate rencounter with the peasant, who had seen him at Madrid, these proofs would doubtless have been satisfactory. However, the young Pole firmly adhered to the account he had first given of himself, and never prevaricated in his answers.

" Ask him," said the president of the committee, " whether he is friendly to the Spaniards, since he says he is not a Frenchman ?"

The interpreter translated the question.

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" Yes doubtless," replied Leckinski, " I love and respect the noble character of the Spaniards, and I wish your nation and mine were both united."

" Colonel," said the interpreter, " the prisoner says he hates us, because we carry on war like banditti ; and he would like to see the whole nation united in one man, that he might annihilate it at a single blow."

Whilst these words were uttered, the eyes of the whole assembly attentively watched the expression of the prisoner's countenance, to see what effect would be produced by the infidelity of his interpreter. He stood unmoved.

Leckinski was prepared for every trial, and was on his guard against the snare.

" Gentlemen," said General Castaños, " who was present at the examination, it appears to me that there is no ground of suspicion against this young man ; and therefore he must be set at liberty, and allowed to pursue his journey."

Accordingly his arms, and despatches were restored to him ; and the brave young Pole thus triumphantly passed through a series of trials, which required almost superhuman fortitude, and presence of mind.* He arrived safely in Lisbon, fulfilled his mission, and wished to return to Madrid ; but Junot would not suffer him again to expose himself to the dangers he had so miraculously escaped.

I was at Burgos when I received the first intel-

* M. Leckinski is at present in France.

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ligence of Napoleon's intended marriage with Maria Louisa. A friend who wrote to me from Paris spoke of the disastrous influence which a marriage with an Austrian Princess was likely to exercise on the destiny of Napoleon. He was, it is true, Emperor of the French, but he was likewise *General Bonaparte*, who had gained more than twenty pitched battles over Austria; and who had twice forced the imperial family to fly from their palace. These were injuries which could not but leave indelible stains behind them. The sacrifice which the Emperor Francis was now about to make, bore an odious stamp of selfishness. It appeared by no means improbable, that at some future time the voice of his daughter, when appealing to him in behalf of her son and her husband, would be no more listened to, than when she remonstrated for herself. It was evident that Austria, humbled and mutilated as she was, greeted this marriage only as a temporary balm to her wounds. Napoleon's object was to consolidate his northern alliances, already well secured on the part of Russia, and to prosecute still further his fatal operations in the Peninsula.

It was likewise during my stay at Burgos that I heard of the union of the Papal States with France. It would be difficult to describe the effect which this intelligence produced in Spain. It was speedily followed by the circulation of thousands of copies of the Bull of excommunication. Children, even in the tender age of infancy, were taught to lisp the most horrible imprecations on

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the French. Only those who were witnesses to the re-action, which took place in Spain at this period, can form a just estimate of the error which Napoleon committed in taking possession of the city of Rome, and making the Pope his captive.

Shortly after the intelligence of these events reached us in Spain, we heard of the important revolution in South America, by which a federal government was established under the title of the American Confederation of Venezuela. It was plain that other revolutions were likely to follow, which would materially effect the importance of the conquest of Spain. The mother country, without her South American possessions would be like a body deprived of its limbs.

Meanwhile we were gaining great victories in Spain, that is to say, we were taking cities and provinces; but we were making little progress in the conquest of the country,—as the result ultimately proved.

We left Burgos for Valladolid, Junot having received orders to establish there the head-quarters of the 8th corps. General Reignier and the 2nd corps were near the Tagus, and Marshal Ney, with the 6th corps was in Salamanca. General Kellerman, Count de Valmy, was then Governor of Valladolid and of all the kingdom of Leon, as well as of the Asturias and a portion of Spanish Estramadura.

General Kellerman received me with the most marked courtesy. The residence prepared for me was the palace of Charles V situated in the

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grand square of the city, and which had formerly been the hotel of the Inquisition. The palace is a fine building, and General Kellerman had taken great pains to arrange it for my reception. It did not, it is true, retain the magnificence which it presented when it was the abode of the monarch above mentioned; but such as it was, it appeared to me a paradise after my prison at Burgos.

Junot had received from Paris a letter written by the Prince de Neufchatel, informing him, that the Emperor having directed General Suchet to prosecute actively the sieges of all the towns of Catalonia and Arragon, his Majesty was also anxious that the towns of the west, which still held out, should fall at the same time. Consequently Junot was to take Astorga as speedily as possible.

Junot was overjoyed at the receipt of this letter, and immediately ordered Colonel Valazé and General Boyer, the chief officers of his staff, to make the requisite preparations. He was on the point of departing for Astorga when he received despatches from Madrid, directing him to proceed to Salamanca, to succeed Ney, who was to be removed to some other place.

I observed that Junot was much ruffled on reading this dispatch. "Why," said I, "should you vex yourself about these contradictory orders? You cannot obey them both. Write to Marshal Ney, and see what his answer will be. His movements must correspond with yours, and yours with his."

Junot followed my advice, and Valladolid not being far from Salamanca, he received an answer

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in two days. Ney informed Junot that he had received orders from the commander-in-chief of the French army, the Prince de Neufchatel, which orders certainly did not authorize them to fall back on Valladolid. He added that he thought it also the duty of Junot to obey the instructions of Berthier, for that he and the Emperor were their *only commanders*.

On learning Ney's resolution, Junot resolved to commence the siege of Astorga. Such was the conduct of the generals whom the Emperor placed under each other's orders in Spain. I shall have to record many examples of the same kind which occurred after the arrival of Massena.

Junot quitted Valladolid on the 14th of April and arrived at Astorga on the 17th. As he was passing the bridge of Leon a musket ball fell at the distance of a few paces from his horse, between him and his aide-de-camp. The musket had been fired from a little hill near the bridge. Two officers immediately ascended to the summit of the hill, but no one was to be seen. Junot had a narrow escape, for the assassin had taken his aim well.

On his arrival at Astorga, Junot fixed his head-quarters at Castrillo. The digging of the trenches continued for two days, and on the 20th, Junot ordered the firing to commence. At seven in the evening the breach was opened. Next day the 21st, Junot gave orders for an attack. The breach was carried by the *bataillon d'élite*, commanded by M. de Lagrave, one of the Duke's aides-de-camp, a brave and intelligent young officer. At

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four in the morning of the 22nd the town offered to capitulate, and at one in the afternoon the garrison, amounting to 3,500 men, defiled before the Duke and marched in the direction of France.

On the day when the first column of prisoners arrived at Valladolid, M. Magnien asked me to go out in a calèche to see them defile. The weather was delightfully fine, and I should have enjoyed an agreeable drive, but for a circumstance which filled me with feelings of the most painful kind. I suddenly heard a discharge of musketry at a little distance, and the report of the firing re-echoed amidst the hills which rose along the road side.

"What is that?" said I to M. Magnien. He could not inform me, and he repeated my question to an officer who commanded the convoy of the prisoners.

"Oh nothing," replied the officer carelessly, "some of those fellows pretend to be lame, and say they cannot march, so I have ordered them to be shot, that's all. Lame indeed! I'll answer for it, that if we were to leave them behind they would soon find the use of their legs to rejoin Don Julian!"

I was horror struck, and could scarcely believe that I had understood the man rightly. We had by this time arrived at a turn of the road, and I saw two men fall. I felt my blood curdle and the chill of death seemed to be creeping over me. "Turn back! for heaven's sake, turn back!" I exclaimed to Magnien, "I cannot bear this!"

"And do you imagine, Madame," said the

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officer, who had charge of the convoy, " that our prisoners are better treated on board the pontoons of Cadiz? My brother perished there."—These words were uttered in a tone and accompanied by a look of revenge which seemed like an anathema of death to the wretched captives.

The musket shot which was fired at Junot on his way from Valladolid to Astorga, reminds me of another attempt to assassinate him which occurred at Lisbon. His aides-de-camp had frequently been troubled by applications from a man who solicited an audience of the Duke, under various frivolous pretences. At length M. Hersant, one of Junot's aides-de-camp, arrested the man one evening when he was endeavouring to slip into the interior apartments unperceived. He was searched, and upon his person were found a poignard and a knife. He did not deny his murderous design, trusting that the presence of the English would save him. But to do them justice they shewed no disposition to interfere in the affair, except to urge the punishment of the criminal.

Junot himself passed sentence on him: " Go your ways," said he, " I will not shed your blood. There are twenty piasters for you, and tell your comrades that I offer a hundred to any one who will come here and follow your example."

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CHAPTER II.

Miraculous escape of six hundred French prisoners—Death of the Chevalier d'Eon and M. de Montgolfier—France loses her last Colonies—Union of France, Holland and Italy—Bernadotte—Nuptial festivities in Paris—Maria-Louisa's regret at leaving Vienna—Her favourite dog—Berthier's scheme—The Empress's arrival in France—The little dog brought from Vienna—Fetes at Valladolid—The Marchioness de Arabacca—Arrival of the Prince of Essling at Valladolid—The young dragoon officer—The cross of the legion of honour worn by a female—Massena's arrival at the Palace of Charles V—Marshal Ney's ill-humour—Massena's character—History of Fra Diavolo.

About this period a most extraordinary event occurred in Spain. Six hundred French prisoners, who were on board the pontoons, in the Bay of Cadiz, planned the bold scheme of effecting their escape; and what is more strange, carried it into execution. They had to pass two of the enemy's inspecting squadrons, and this they did on board of a wretched hulk, divested of masts, sails or rigging of any kind. These six hundred prisoners were almost all officers. They turned to account their knowledge of mathematics; and taking advantage of the wind, fixed upon the moment of their deliverance, at least the moment for attempting it; for they could not hope to suc-

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ceed unless their countrymen, who were encamped on terra firma on the coast opposite to the *puntales*, should be made acquainted with their design. One of the prisoners, whose name deserves to be for ever remembered, (the Chevalier de Faurax), plunged into the sea, and swam a distance of fifteen hundred toises, to communicate the plan to Marshal Victor, whose army corps was so situated as to be able to assist them. The brave young man not only endured the fatigue of this excessive exertion, but he eluded the vigilance of the two squadrons, and of several gun boats. Having obtained the assurance that Marshal Victor would adopt every measure for rendering assistance to his companions in misfortune, M. Faurax, aware that the slightest signal might ruin all, once more swam across the Bay, to secure the escape of his unfortunate comrades, or to share with them their sad fate.

Several other remarkable occurrences happened almost at the same time. Two individuals, respecting whom a great deal of interest was excited, died almost on the same day, the one in London, and the other in Paris. These were the Chevalier d'Eon and M. de Montgolfier. The former, whose sex was a matter of doubt, was a striking example, of the scandalous policy of the Cabinet of Versailles, and the degenerate condition of France under Louis XV, and his minister Pompadour. The other was a man who seemed to have been created for the advancement of science. He traversed unknown roads, where no mortal had ventured be-

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fore him, and forced even the elements to obey him.

Next came the loss of our last remaining colonies, Bourbon and the Isle of France; and as if to compensate for this calamity, it was speedily followed by the union of Holland with France. We now spoke of the department of the Zuyderzee, and the department of the Tiber. We had lost some distant islands; but France counted thirty six thousand square leagues, one hundred and thirty departments, and more than forty three millions of inhabitants!

I received from Paris a letter which at first appeared to me very singular, but on reading it over a second time, and recollecting all that I had heard Bernadotte say a thousand times I was not so much astonished. The letter informed me of his intended adoption by the King of Sweden, Charles XII. But I shall have more to say on this subject in another place. At present I must follow the course of events in Spain.

Junot having taken Astorga, returned to Valladolid. The intelligence from the west assumed an alarming character. General Kellerman had defeated the army of the Duke del Parque; Marshal Ney was still in Salamanca, and General Reignier was in the direction of the Tagus. It was not known who was to take the command of the army of Portugal, and yet that army would soon be required to march. Meanwhile Paris was enlivened by fetes in honour of the imperial nuptials. The letters which I received from my friends

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were like the descriptions in romances and fairy tales. As I was not in Paris at that time, I will not enter into a detail of matters, which I did not witness; but I cannot forbear relating the following anecdote connected with Napoleon's marriage.

Berthier, Prince de Neufchâtel, was sent to Vienna to conduct the Empress to Paris. After she had been married by proxy to her uncle Prince Charles, and all the forms and ceremonies were gone through, (which in Vienna is a work of no little time), the day of departure was fixed. The young Arch-Duchess often shed tears of regret, for her approaching separation from her family. In the Imperial Family of Austria, the bonds of relationship are sacredly revered; and even in the reign of Maria-Theresa, and under the cold and artful policy of Kaunitz, family ties were held dear. Maria Louisa had been educated in these feelings: she wept to leave her sisters, her father, and her mother-in-law, and perhaps also she wept at the thought of being united to a man, who must have been to her almost an object of terror.

At length the day of departure arrived. The young Empress bade farewel to all the members of her family, and then retired to her apartment, where etiquette required that she should wait till Berthier came to conduct her to her carriage. When Berthier entered the cabinet, he found her bathed in tears. With a voice choked by sobs, she apologized for appearing so childish; "But," said

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she, " my grief is excusable. See how I am surrounded here by a thousand things, that are dear to me. These are my sister's drawings, that tapestry was wrought by my mother, those paintings are by my uncle Charles." In this manner, she went through the inventory of her cabinet, and there was scarcely a thing, down to the carpet on the floor, which was not the work of some beloved hand. There were her singing birds, her parrot, and above all, the object which she seemed to value most, and most to regret—a little dog.

It was of course known at the court of Vienna how greatly the Emperor used to be annoyed by Josephine's favourite pet dogs, with *Fortune* at their head. Therefore Francis II, like a prudent father, took care that his daughter should leave her pet dog at Vienna. Yet it was a cruel separation, and the Princess and her favourite parted with a tender *duo* of complaint.

But these regrets, childish as they may appear, Berthier regarded as the proof of a kind and affectionate heart; and when he beheld the tears of the young Arch-Duchess, whom he had expected to find all radiant with smiles, a scheme entered his mind, which he tacitly resolved to carry into execution.

" I have merely come to acquaint your Majesty," said he, " that you need not depart for two hours to come. I will therefore withdraw until that time."

He went immediately to the Emperor and acquainted him with his plan. Francis II, who is

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the most indulgent of fathers, readily assented to the proposition.

Berthier gave his orders, and in less than two hours all was ready.—The Empress entered France —she found herself surrounded by festivals and rejoicings, and began almost to forget the parrot and the dog. She arrived at Compiegne. There she was met by the Emperor, who stopped her carriage, stepped into it, and seated himself by her side; they proceeded to Saint-Cloud, and thence to Paris. There fortune bestowed one of her last smiles on her favourite son, when leading into the balcony of the Tuileries his young bride, whom he regarded as the pledge of lasting peace and alliance, he presented her to the multitude who were assembled beneath the windows of the palace.

On retiring from the balcony, he said to her, "Well, Louise, I must give you some little reward for the happiness you have conferred on me," and leading her to a small apartment of the palace, he opened the door, and her favourite dog ran out to greet her. On entering the room, how was Maria-Louisa astonished to find the pictures, the tapestry, the birds, and all the valued contents of her *boudoir* at Vienna. She threw herself into the arms of the Emperor and burst into tears.

We too, had our fêtes at Valladolid. General Kellerman gave a ball, and I gave another. Among the belles who figured at these parties, one of the most admired was the Marchioness de Arabacca, the daughter of the Intendant of Valladolid. She was a fine woman, of lively and agreeable

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manners. When I was talking about her one day, with an officer of the Duke's staff, he quoted a couplet of an old French song and said:

"Elle aime à rire, elle aime à boire,
Elle aime à chanter comme nous."

I learned that the marchioness had an excellent piano-forte, of which she made no use, and I wrote to request that she would lend it to me. She replied to me by a little note very elegantly written. When I say a little note, I mean three or four lines, but written on a sheet of paper almost as large as that used for official dispatches. This is the custom in the south of Europe. In Italy, the ladies never write on note-paper. The Marchioness de Arabacca sent me the piano. As soon as it arrived, I sat down to try it. I liked the tone very much, but there was an unpleasant jarring in the bass, which I could not account for. I opened the instrument, and found lying across the bass strings, a little packet of cigars, *(paquilla de cigaritas)*. This immediately explained to me the application of the couplet quoted by the officer.

One day after the arrival of an estafette from Paris, I observed that Junot appeared out of humour. I asked him what was the matter.

"We are to have a General-in-Chief of the army of Portugal," replied he, with a forced smile. "The Emperor does not think Marshal Ney or I fit for the trust. We are to be placed under guardianship."

"Who is appointed?" enquired I.

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"Oh! I cannot complain of the choice that has been made.... It is Massena.... He is our senior ....I only hope that Ney will accommodate himself to this arrangement as readily as I do."

Next day a letter was received from Vittoria, announcing that the Prince of Essling might be expected at the end of the week. Orders were given for preparing for his reception one half of the palace in which we resided; but we had then no idea that he was to be accompanied by a lady.

The day of his expected arrival was exceedingly fine. Junot and General Kellerman, accompanied by their staffs and principal officers, went on horseback to meet him. The cortège amounted to at least two hundred individuals.

When they had advanced about a league from the town, they perceived the equipages of the Marshal and his suite. Massena rode first, in a small uncovered calèche; and at his side was seated a very boyish officer of dragoons, decorated with the cross of the legion of honour. As this badge of distinction was then very sparingly distributed, its appearance on the breast of so very young an officer attracted general remark. Massena's companion seemed anxious to evade notice, and when the Marshal perceived the numerous retinue that was advancing to meet him, he wished to draw up the hood of the calèche; but he had not time, for the three generals-in-chief set off at full gallop, and came up with him in two or three minutes.

They gave him a most cordial reception. Junot

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was too generous not to relinquish all pretention, in spite of his feelings; Ney was sometimes actuated by amiable impulses, and Reignier was too prudent to manifest the least mortification.

However Massena appeared ill at ease. From time to time he was observed to cast on his young companion a glance of distress, which was very amusing to some, and was not at all understood by others. As to the young officer of dragoons, he sat with his eyes cast down and rivetted on the points of his boots.

"Monsieur le Maréchal," said Junot, "my wife will be delighted to have the honour of receiving you in the palace of Charles V. We hope you will be accommodated to your satisfaction."

"How," exclaimed Massena, with evident confusion, "is Madame Junot at Valladolid?"

"Certainly," replied Junot, not a little surprised at the astonishment expressed by the Marshal.

"Then," said Massena, after a little hesitation, "I cannot think of going to reside in the palace—that cannot be."

"If you are afraid of not having sufficient room," observed Junot, somewhat piqued, "my wife and I must remove—you are my superior in command."

"Mon Dieu! I do not mean that....I do not mean that," exclaimed Massena, "but—"

He did not finish this sentence, and Junot could scarcely refrain from laughing outright in his face, for at that moment some one whispered in

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his ear that the Marshal's military companion was no other than a young female.

The confusion of the veteran Marshal, as he drove on to Valladolid, may be easily conceived. As soon as he reached the foot of the grand staircase, he requested Junot to conduct him to my apartments. He advanced to me with his usual frankness of manner, pressed my hand, and expressed himself overjoyed to see me. I was informed that he was very glad Junot's heart was in safe keeping, for that he was very jealous of Clausel and Kellerman. As to the lady she immediately retired to her own apartment, and during the three months which the Prince of Essling passed at Valladolid, I never caught a glimpse of her but once. She had strict orders to keep herself concealed.

Massena was not a Frenchman by birth, but he was one of the most remarkable men in our revolution. He was naturally ill tempered, and his manners were not very polished. Being at an early period of his life placed in a situation in which talent could find its reward, he rapidly distinguished himself in his military career, and it was he whom Bonaparte succeeded in the command of the army of Italy. Massena was of a selfish disposition, and was often cruel in conquest. The Emperor esteemed his military genius very highly, and regretted that he was sometimes under the necessity of treating him harshly.

Marshal Ney came to pay a visit to Massena, but he did it against his inclination. No officer

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was ever so dissatisfied at being placed under the command of another. Massena felt Ney's behaviour; but he was the best dissembler of the two, and he concealed his ill humour beneath an air of assumed indifference.

Massena had as much regard for me as I believe he could have for any one who could be of no service to him. He used often to come and chat with me in the morning, and these visits were very agreeable to me as they afforded me some insight into the character of a man, who seems to have been but imperfectly known to most of his biographers.

With an appearance of simplicity, he possessed a considerable share of pride. This pride was, it is true, perfectly well founded, but it was artfully concealed behind a rampart of seeming plainness of manner, and contempt of greatness. He pretended indifference to fortune, while at the same time he was ardently courting her favours; and with a person which could never have been pleasing, his numerous gallantries became a subject of ridicule as well as of scandal.

During our morning gossipings, the Prince of Essling used often to talk of his campaigns in Italy and Switzerland, and without any flattery, I could assure him that his conversation was very interesting. He told me the history of *Fra Diavolo*, the famous bandit who has been the subject of so many romances and melodramas.

Fra Diavolo's real name was Michele Pezza, and he was already famous for his robberies and mas-

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sacres at Itri, during the campaign of Naples, commanded by Championnet. At that time he harrassed the rear of the French army, organized masses of insurgents in Upper and Lower Calabria, and directed a formidable conspiracy against the French. He was a native of Itri, (Terra de Lavoro), and in his youth was a goatherd. He afterwards entered a convent, turned monk, and strange enough, took the name of *Fra Angelo*. However, his bad conduct speedily caused him to be expelled from the convent, and he then fled to the mountains and pursued the life of a bandit. He lived by plunder, and every day of his life was marked by a murder. He headed a party of smugglers, and spread desolation throughout the country. The government of King Ferdinand condemned him to be hanged, and a price was set upon his head.

But Queen Caroline, Ferdinand's wife, was a woman who knew how to turn everything, however bad, to some useful account. An *amnesty* was granted to Michele Pezza, and he was appointed commander of a corps of freed galley slaves, who were to attack the rear of the French army from Fondi to Garigliano.

When the French took Gaeta and Capoua, Fra Diavolo fixed his quarters in Itri, his native country, where he committed every imaginable horror. The inhabitants of the town were plundered of all they possessed, and Itri was soon occupied only by the followers of *Fra Diavolo*. Travellers journeying from Naples to Rome, who entered Itri to

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procure a night's lodging, slept never to wake again. The most artful devices were employed to allure the victims into the houses of Itri, from which they never came out alive.

General Olivier at that time had the command of Gaeta. Being informed that a troop of banditti was in possession of Itri, he dispatched a Polish regiment, commanded by a young officer, who with chivalrous courage entered eagerly on the dangerous expedition. He expelled Fra Diavolo from Itri and drove him into the woods; but the brigand, undaunted by his defeat returned, was attacked by the Polish troops, and frightful carnage ensued. The engagement took place in the town of Itri, and most of the houses were destroyed. Fra Diavolo was a second time driven into the mountains, and the country round Itri was scoured of banditti; a benefit which was due to the energetic measures of General Olivier.

The Polish regiment had no sooner withdrawn from Itri, and commenced their march to Molo-di-Gaeta, than two thousand insurgents and banditti again shewed themselves. General Olivier dispatched two squadrons and a Polish battalion to meet them, who dispersed them, and afterwards remained in possession of Itri. Fra Diavolo no longer offered any resistance. He abandoned Terra-de-Lavoro, and retired with his followers to infest the Calabrias, which became the scene of his depredations and atrocities.

Will future generations ever believe that a man like Fra Diavolo should have enjoyed the favour of

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the King and Queen of Sicily?....Yet incredible as it may appear, it is nevertheless the fact. Queen Caroline sent him a bracelet ornamented with her portrait; and the English government gave him a commission in the British army. To crown all, his life was spared:—that life of which the hangman had been defrauded, and on which a price had so lately been set.

Massena assured me that the power of Fra Diavolo was inconceivable during the first and second occupation of Naples by the French troops, for the inhabitants of the mountains who were as lawless and desperate as himself, joyfully followed a chief who led them to plunder. One day he ventured to make a descent upon Itri, from which the military force had been a short interval withdrawn. He entered in the middle of the night, barbarously massacred all who resisted him, and made the rest of the inhabitants prisoners.

On the second occupation of Naples by our troops, Fra Diavolo being driven from Terra-Firma took refuge in Capri. He was at length arrested at Salerno, conveyed to Naples, and condemned without even the form of a trial; "For," as Salicetti observed, "it was only necessary to refer to the sentence already passed upon him, by those just and wise sovereigns Caroline and Ferdinand." The English whose ships were cruising before the Bay of Naples sent a flag of truce to solicit the liberation of the *British Major* Michele Pezza, as a prisoner of war, and threatening, if the request should not be granted, to use reprisals towards

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all the Neapolitan prisoners who might fall into their hands. Salicetti's answer was, that he knew of no Major in the English service, who had been taken prisoner by the troops of his Majesty King Joseph; but that if the individual referred to, were Fra Diavolo, a man holding no commission, and without character, either military or political, he had been hanged the night before, in conformity with an old sentence passed by the tribunals of King Ferdinand, by which he had been condemned as a murderer, a robber, an incendiary and a smuggler!....

Such is the true history of Fra Diavolo.

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CHAPTER III

Colonel Valazé — Marshal Ney's letter to Massena—General M....—Caricature of Murat — Misunderstanding between Junot and Massena—Departure for Ciudad Rodrigo—Intelligence from Paris—Fêtes at the Hotel-de-Ville and the Ecole Militaire—The Emperor and Empress visit Belgium—Abdication of Louis, King of Holland—Projected treaty with England —M. de Labouchere's mission to London—Louis accuses the Emperor of bad faith—Napoleon's rage—Fouché—The intrigue unravelled—The Chevalier Fagan—Bernadotte chosen King of Sweden—His remark to the Emperor—Napoleon's suspicions of him—Ciudad Rodrigo taken—My departure for Ledesma.

LIEUTENANT COLONEL VALAZÉ, a young officer of engineers, was a particular favourite of the Duke d'Abrantes. Junot introduced him to Massena, with the request that he would put him in the way of advancement, by entrusting him with the command of the siege of Ciudad-Rodrigo. Massena replied, that nothing would give him greater pleasure, and Valazé set out for Salamanca as soon as he had received instructions from the general-in-chief.

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Two days after this, Massena was in my drawing-room playing at some game with Junot, when Valazé suddenly entered. He had returned to Valladolid, Ney would not allow him to be employed. He had no fault to find with him,—but he said he had officers of his own; "And the Prince of Essling," observed he, "Prince as he is, shall not dictate to me how I am to form my staff."

On the following morning Massena had a conversation with Junot, in which the latter had great difficulty to pacify him. He was for sending Marshal Ney back again to France.

"You will find," exclaimed he, "that that proud fellow will thwart all our operations by his obstinacy and his vanity."

Junot said nothing, either to defend or blame Ney, though he had been hurt by an observation made by the Marshal, which some person had foolishly repeated to him. Ney had said:

"There is no occasion for the Duke d'Abrantes to trouble me with his protégés. If they are so very clever let him keep them to himself."

These ebullitions of ill-temper often placed Ney in a light which was anything but heroic; yet he was nevertheless a true hero.

Valazé was dispatched a second time to Salamanca. The young man was tossed to and fro like a ball between rackets. Ney flew into a passion, and sent Massena a very angry letter, in which he told him that he neither regarded his orders, nor feared his menaces, when he attempted to disturb the staff of the army formed

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by the Prince of Neufchâtel. I cannot attempt to describe Massena's anger on the perusal of this letter, which he held in his hand when he entered our apartment.

"You see," said he "how impossible it is to make any thing of this man."

This he spoke in a loud and vehement tone, as he paced backwards and forwards through the room.

I endeavoured to calm him, but in vain; and Valazé who felt his dignity compromised by being thus repulsed, willingly relinquished the honour of commanding the siege. The prince however resolved to go in person to Ciudad-Rodrigo for the express purpose of taking Valazé there. All this boded but indifferently for the success of the approaching campaign.

We now left Valladolid for Salamanca. There was in the army of Portugal a general of division commanding the artillery (General Héblé), another commanding the cavalry (General M——), and a third who was chief officer of the staff (General Fririon). General M—— was a perfect caricature of Murat. He wore on his head a shapska surmounted by feathers, his Polish cloak was lined with fur, and his boots were not unfrequently red. He was not, however, so good looking as Murat. But he was a brave officer, though he rendered himself ridiculous by endeavouring to imitate Murat, with a stature about five feet eight inches high. During the campaign of Wagram, he commanded a fortified castle at which M. de

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Metternich halted under an escort of French gendarmerie on his return to his native country. General M—— assumed airs of importance which were the more galling to M. de Metternich, inasmuch, as the castle was the property of his wife.

Having exercised his hospitality after a fashion of his own, the general said to the captive minister:

"Your pardon, Monsieur le Comte, if I were in my own house, I would give you a better reception."

At length the siege of Ciudad-Rodrigo commenced. The three generals-in-chief left Salamanca to invest a paltry village; for Ciudad-Rodrigo was nothing more. The works were in great part under the direction of Valazé. Massena was greatly irritated against Ney, and this occasioned a coolness between him and Junot; for the latter defended Ney, who in fact was in the right.

The troops began to defile upon Ciudad-Rodrigo. They were taken from each army corps; and that of Junot, as well as the second and the sixth, furnished its contingent. In the course of these movements some letters passed between Junot and Massena, at which Junot took offence, and on one occasion a very sharp explanation ensued in consequence. This angry feeling had not subsided before a fresh ground of discord arose respecting a company of artillery belonging to Junot's army corps, which had received orders to defile upon Ciudad-Rodrigo. On learning this fact, the duke enquired of General Fouché and General Boyer

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whether they had received, and given orders for the departure of the company, and on their answering in the negative, he entered my apartment in a state of irritation, such as I never remember to have seen him in. He did not observe me ; but seized his hat and sabre, and as he clasped his belt, he said, fortunately loud enough for me to hear :—

" There must be an end of this. I am tired of it. A good sabre blow will settle all."

I threw myself before him, to prevent him leaving the apartment.

" What are you thinking of ?" I exclaimed, in an agony of alarm. He stopped and looked at me with a sort of wild stare ; then seizing me by the arm, he thrust me aside.

" Leave me, Laura," said he, " this affair concerns not you. Leave me. My honour is compromised by this proceeding of the Prince d'Essling. He knows my character. He knows that I will not bear an insult, and surely it is an insult to give orders to the troops in my army corps without consulting me. It is not the first time ; I have an old score to settle with him. Leave me, I desire you."

He grasped the hilt of his sword ; I plainly saw that he was bent on a duel.

" You shall not leave this room !" said I, for the Prince d'Essling's quarters were so near ours, that he would have been there in a few moments, and I was satisfied that, at the first word, Massena would have been as ready to fight as he himself.

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" You shall not leave this room!" I repeated, placing my back to the door; but this was too feeble an obstacle to restrain Junot. He took me up in his arms, in spite of my resistance, and placing me on a chair, opened the door and was going out. The door of the apartment opened into the drawing-room, and there, to his surprise, he found assembled General Boyer, M.M. Magnien, Michaud and Fisson, and Colonel Grandsaigne; in short, with one single exception, he found there none but his friends. The individual who formed this exception, and whom I would name but that he is now suffering under misfortune, was the cause of great mischief both to my husband and to Marshal Ney. I followed Junot into the drawing-room, and addressing myself to those who I knew to be most devoted to my husband's interests, I conjured them to use all their influence with him. Fortunately there was no need to do so: with Junot the first impulse was always the most to be dreaded. He now felt that he could not, with any shade of propriety, challenge the veteran of the glory of Rivoli, but he nevertheless made some angry remarks upon him. These were reported to Massena with some additions, and the Prince of Essling when he afterwards told me what he had heard, repeated many expressions which Junot never uttered. Amidst these unpleasant feelings, Junot and Massena left Salamanca to invest Ciudad-Rodrigo. The English with Wellington at their head were advancing from Almeida to relieve the garrison and make a diversion in its favour.

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I maintained a close correspondence with many of my Parisian friends, and each post brought me more important news than that contained in the Moniteur, because it was true. Though so far removed from France, I was, I may say, not altogether absent. My excellent friend Lavalette sent me letters, and I received early and certain intelligence of all that was passing at home, during the time I was at Valladolid and Salamanca. The festivities which at that time enlivened the Parisians, presented the brilliancy of enchantment. Prince Schwartzenberg's ball had not yet taken place, and the melancholy catastrophe which attended it, had not cast a gloom over the French metropolis. The fête at the Hotel-de-Ville was most splendid, and at the Ecole Militaire, the imperial guard endeavoured to rival the magnificent spectacle of the distribution of the eagles at the coronation.

Some weeks after his marriage, the Emperor took the young Empress with him into Belgium. Maria-Louisa received the homage that was paid her with a certain air of indifference, and there then seemed little reason to expect that she would do the honours of the court with the grace and amiability which she subsequently displayed.

But an event which caused me more astonishment than all that was going on in Paris, was the *forced* abdication of Louis, King of Holland. Louis had been a dear friend of my mother, and his kind and amiable temper made me esteem him very highly. His conduct, which some have blamed and others approved, was in my opinion

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always that of an honest man. He had a circle of friends devotedly attached to him, and these friends were also mine. I received through them the details of the revolution in Holland—for the abdication of Louis must be termed a revolution.

Louis comprehended his brother's continental system ; but he understood better the interests of the people he had been called upon to govern. These people who were strangers to custom-house duties, and who were at one period of their history the most flourishing commercial nation in the world, were languishing beneath the terrible system of confiscations and prohibitions. Louis refused to be longer the instrument of a system of tyranny, which was a death blow to the prosperity of Holland. Hereupon, the Emperor directed an army commanded by General Oudinot, to advance into Holland. Louis then abdicated, but only in favour of his son. This abdication was rejected. Marshal Oudinot entered Amsterdam, and Europe learned that Holland was incorporated with the French empire.

When Napoleon found that his brother would not bend to his will, he requested or rather ordered his abdication. Louis was of an amiable and pliant disposition, but when he was required to take a step which he could not consent to without injuring his children and his subjects, he displayed a remarkable degree of firmness. He consented to abdicate, but only on certain conditions. He proposed to his brother that overtures

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should be made to England, and by rendering the affair of Holland the basis of a treaty, peace might be obtained, provided France was willing to concede in the way that Louis wished. The Emperor consented to this, and the King of Holland sent M. Labouchere to England to open negociations. The Marquis of Wellesley was then at the head of the English ministry. M. Labouchere was well known as one of the first bankers in Europe. His transactions with England were extensive and honorable. Every facility was consequently afforded him for effecting the desired object. The affair proceeded as well as could be wished, when in an interview which the King of Holland had with his brother, I think at Antwerp, he asked the Emperor, why, in an affair which concerned his happiness and the honour of his crown, he behaved with such bad faith, and exposed him to such treatment on the part of England. The Emperor stared at him with astonishment and knew not what he meant.

" Whilst," continued the King of Holland, " I have in perfect good faith sent to England an honorable man, whose very presence is a sufficient guarantee of my intentions, you have sent an obscure intriguer, for no other would accept such a mission to treat for you without my concurrence."

" It is false!" exclaimed the Emperor, his eyes flashing with rage, " I say it is false!"

" And I repeat that it is true," continued his brother. " M. Labouchere has been informed of the fact."

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" In the devil's name," exclaimed the Emperor, " to whom do you allude?.... I know nothing of him!.... I have sent no one!"

" But your minister Fouché has," said Louis. " I repeat that the individual I allude to, is at present in London, negociating for you, and discussing those very interests which were to form the basis of our treaty. Is this all the confidence I can place in a brother's promise?"

The Emperor was greatly agitated; he turned pale, and pressed his forehead with his hand, threw himself into his chair and then rose up again. At length stepping up to his brother, he said:

" I perceive there is some plot here; but I know nothing of it. As a sovereign and a brother, I pledge my word of honour that I am ignorant of it.—Do you believe me?"

" I do," replied Louis; " but it behoves you to seek out the author of this foul intrigue. It is a duty you owe to me as well as to your own honour. Who could have dared thus to act in your name?"

To this question the Emperor made no answer; but it was evident that a terrible cloud was gathering in his mind. His brow lowered, his lips were compressed, and every thing betokened a dreadful ebullition of rage.

" You may rely on it, I will discover this tissue of deception," said he to his brother, " I have my suspicion of the serpent who has been laying his snare."

On his return to Paris, the Emperor put the affair into the hands of Dubois, who speedily dis-

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covered that Fouché sent agents to England much more frequently than the measures of police required. Having found the thread of the intrigue, he soon traced out the whole knot, and the emissary was arrested and sent to the Temple.

This man proved to be Chevalier Fagan, a returned emigrant. He confidently believed that he was acting on the part of the Emperor, and had no idea that he was merely an agent of Fouché. The result of this affair was Fouché's disgrace, the cause of which was entirely unknown at the time.

About the same period, other events equally curious were going on in the north of Europe. Bernadotte was chosen King of Sweden, by the states-general, assembled at Olrebro, and Charles XIII adopted him as his son.

When Bernadotte presented himself at the Tuileries, to announce to the Emperor his elevation to the throne of Sweden, Napoleon did not appear inclined to allow him to go and reign so far off. Bernadotte observing his scruples said:

"Would your Majesty then elevate me above yourself, by forcing me to refuse a crown?"

The Emperor looked confused; but immediately recovering his presence of mind answered:

"Well! well! be it so!....Our destinies must be fulfilled."

Subsequent events proved that the Emperor's fears of Bernadotte were not unfounded.

At length Ciudad-Rodrigo was taken, after a siege longer than that of Tarragona. Yet at the siege

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of Ciudad-Rodrigo there were present three great officers of the empire, and a numerous army. Some writers have stated that Marshal Ney commanded the siege. It is certainly true that he was sent to Ciudad-Rodrigo for that purpose; but from the moment when the general-in-chief arrived, he by right, took the command, and all the faults that were committed must rest on his head.

On the conclusion of the siege, Junot wrote to inform me that he was coming to Salamanca, and that I was to hold myself in readiness to depart with him for Ledesma.

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CHAPTER IV.

Description of Salamanca—Portuguese prisoners sent to join the army—Dreadful accident at Prince Schwartzenberg's ball—The temporary ball-room—The Empress's courage—The Emperor's exertions to render assistance to the sufferers—Absence of the engines—Princess Schwartzenberg burnt to death—Escape of Prince Eugene and the Vice-Queen—Death of the Princess de la Leyen—Madame de Br....x—The Emperor's gloomy forebodings—Our removal to Ledesma—Celebration of my birth-day—Grand bull-fight—Josef Delegado, commonly called *Pepe Hillo*—Different methods of attacking bulls—Fiestas Reales in the reign of Carlos II—Costume of the bull-fighters—Our removal to San-Felices-el-Grande—Siege of Almeida—The town blown up—Madame Thomières—My removal to Ciudad-Rodrigo—Junot's departure for Portugal—General Cacault—The battle of Busaco.

THE description I had received of Ledesma made me leave Salamanca with regret. The grand square of Salamanca is exceedingly fine. I think I never enjoyed the light of day and sunshine so perfectly as I did there. The bright streams of light which pour in from all sides of the square, had a most cheering effect on eyes wearied with the darkness of the narrow and confined streets of

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the city. The situation of Salamanca is well chosen, and formerly, when its environs were cultivated, it must have been one of the most agreeable cities in Spain. It is built on a plain, surrounded by the meandering river Tormes, and the outlines of its numerous church steeples, traced on the clear blue horizon, give to Salamanca an aspect very much like that of Tours. But a glance at the neighbouring country banishes the resemblance, for Salamanca is not surrounded by the luxuriant cultivation of France.

The Emperor conceived that he was adopting a wise measure of policy in joining to the army of Portugal a portion of the Portuguese officers and troops whom Junot had sent prisoners to him, with the view of clearing the country of some of the elements of rebellion:—consequently there arrived in Salamanca a great number of Portuguese officers, most of whom fully justified the confidence reposed in them. Many on the contrary did great mischief, while others rendered us but little assistance.

Letters which I received from Paris at this time, informed me of the dreadful catastrophe which occurred at Prince Schwartzenberg's ball. I received upwards of twenty letters describing the particulars of that awful event.

This disaster, which gave rise to so many sinister forebodings, took place on Sunday, July 1st. Prince Schwartzenberg occupied the old Hotel Montesson, in the Rue de Provence, and the apartments not being sufficiently spacious to accommodate

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the immense concourse of company, a temporary ball-room was constructed in the garden.

This ball-room was like a fairy palace. Flowers, perfumes, delicious music, the dazzling splendour of diamonds and rubies, all combined to render it a scene of oriental enchantment. The walls of the ball-room were covered with gold and silver brocade, and ornamented with draperies of spangled gauze fastened by bouquets of flowers, whilst hundreds of chrystal girandoles shed their prismatic lustre over the glittering scene.

When the fire was first discovered, the Emperor was passing round the room and conversing with the ladies. The room had but one door for the ingress and egress of the company. It was a very large one, opening into the garden, and fronting the throne. At the back of the throne there was a small wooden gallery, which made a communication between the ball-room and the house. It was in the angle of this little gallery that the fire was first discovered. The ball had just commenced, and a great part of the company were dancing. It was at the time remarked as very extraordinary that nobody thought of ascending the gallery above mentioned, and escaping into the house ; but it was certainly natural to fly from the flames which issued from the house, or at least appeared to do so. The Empress was in conversation with some ladies at a little distance from the throne, and when the confusion and alarm commenced, she with great *sang-froid*, or perhaps it may be called courage, ascended the steps of the throne, seated

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herself, and waited till the Emperor went to her.

As to the Emperor, his conduct on this occasion was beyond all praise. He handed the Empress into the first carriage which he found standing in the court-yard, and accompanied her as far as the Place Louis XV. He then returned alone to Prince Schwartzenberg's hotel, where he actively exerted himself in giving orders and assisting the persons who had been burnt or otherwise hurt. On the Emperor's return the engines had not yet arrived.

The Austrian embassy were loud in their praise of the noble confidence evinced by the Emperor in returning alone to the scene of terror in the middle of the night. He remained on the spot till half-past three on the following morning.

The deeply lamented victim of this catastrophe, the unfortunate Princess Schwartzenberg was killed by returning to the ball-room in search of her daughter, who however had been saved. A lustre fell from the ceiling on the head of the Princess and fractured her skull. She fell into an aperture, caused by the burning of the floor, and her body, with the exception of her bosom and part of one arm, was burnt to a cinder. She was recognisable only by a gold chain which she wore round her neck, and to which was suspended a locket set round with jewels, whose initial letters formed a motto. She was one of the most charming women of her time: beautiful, amiable, graceful and accomplished.

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Prince Eugene had the good-fortune to perceive a small private door behind the throne, which had been made for the use of the servants, who handed round the refreshments. The Prince saved the Vice-Queen by conducting her through that door to the interior of the house.

The Princess de la Leyen, the niece of the Prince Primate, was burnt in a most frightful manner. Like Princess Schwartzenberg, she had left her daughter dancing, and returned to the ball room to rescue her. Her daughter however had escaped. The young lady and her father, after fruitlessly searching for the princess, concluded that she had returned to Passy where they resided. On returning home, however, they found she was not there. The family then became dreadfully alarmed. The prince threw off his embroidered coat and his decorations, and hastened back to Paris in search of her.

Meanwhile a Swedish officer had carried out from the burning ruins of the ball-room, the almost lifeless remains of a female. Her countenance was so blackened and disfigured, that it was impossible to recognise her features. The silver mounting of her diamond tiara had melted and penetrated into her head. Hearing a faint groan uttered by what appeared to be merely a mass of cinder, the officer discovered that life was not yet extinct. He conveyed the princess to a shop in the neighbourhood of the ambassador's hotel, where every attention was rendered to her. After various unintelligible ejaculations, the Princess was heard to

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utter the word *Passy*. Eager to accomplish his humane task, the officer engaged a *fiacre* and drove the unfortunate lady to Passy, enquiring at every house of respectability whether any one was missing. At length he reached the abode of the Princess de la Leyen, whose frightful condition exceeded the worst which the fears of her family had pictured.

The unfortunate lady expired on the following day, having lingered four-and-twenty hours in indescribable agony.

A lady of my acquaintance, Madame de Bre..x, *dame de compagnie* to Madame Mère, was at Prince Schwartzenberg's fête. On the alarm of fire being given, she endeavoured to reach the door, but in the confusion she was thrown down and trampled on. With great effort, she succeeded in raising herself up, and crawled as she supposed to a seat, but the floor appeared to sink under her, and she fell. She had been unconsciously hurried into the garden, and the hollow into which she fell was a basin, which luckily happened to be dry at the time. By this means her life was saved, but she was dreadfully bruised, and the scars on her arms and neck were indelible memorials of Prince Schwartzenberg's fête.

This melancholy accident, in addition to its own immediate and fatal consequences, had the effect of creating a sort of superstitious terror. It naturally called to mind a similar catastrophe which occurred on the marriage of Louis XVI and Marie Antoinette. As to the Emperor, the gloomy fore-

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bodings which assailed his mind after that night were not generally known, but I shall have occasion to speak of them hereafter.

When we left Salamanca for Ledesma, the weather was very fine; but the heat more oppressive than I ever recollect to have felt. Ledesma is a large town, with some remains of Moorish, and also Roman fortifications. Nothing could be more comfortless, as a place of residence. I had the best house in the town, and yet in France, it would scarcely have been thought good enough for the porter's lodge at a provincial chateau—for I do not speak of those in the environs of Paris.

During my residence at Ledesma, I witnessed a spectacle which deserves to be noted down in my recollections. My birthday was at hand, and Junot wished to celebrate it by a *fête*. We had never seen a bull-fight, because when we were first in Spain, they were prohibited. Junot engaged a circus, and every preparation was made for a grand bull-fight on the 10th of August. The entertainment bade fair to be very expensive, owing to the difficulty of procuring, not only men but animals; though we were in the part of Spain which formerly used to supply bulls, for the most brilliant fights of Madrid. We learned from the corregidor that there was in Ledesma a man, who had then retired, but who had formerly been an assistant of the celebrated Pepe Hillo,* and who

* Josef Delgado (*vulgo*) Hillo....The same individual who was known under the name of *Pepillo*.

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even in the life time of the latter, had been denominated the *secunda spada de Espana.* The corregidor sent for him, and the bull-fight was determined on. The arrangements were made on the plan of the old combats, except that only three or four bulls were killed; I confess it was quite enough for me. The spectacle was certainly curious, but I felt it revolting to my feelings as a woman.

The man engaged by Junot, and who was the rival of the famous Delgado, talked of bull fighting like a consummate artist. I scarcely ever saw such a specimen of vanity. Junot sent for him before the fight, and they had a long conversation on *la tauromaquia o l'arte de torrear,* as it was termed by the famous Hillo. The *secunda spada* of Spain related to us a number of curious facts. In the first place the dispositions of different bulls are very various, and these differences should be ascertained before the combat commences. If the bull be what is technically called *franco, boyaute* or *sencillo,* he is combatted *a la suerte de la Veronica,* that is to say the *diestro* or *torero** attacks him in the front. If the bull be of the kind termed *toro que se cine,* or one which rushes to attack the object before it, he is fought in the manner called *hartar los toros de capa.* The *matador* shakes before the animal's eyes, the *capa* or cloak, (which is almost always red), and when

* Bull-fighter.

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the bull darts forward to the attack, his horns become entangled in the *capa*. The latter when used in this way is called the *eugano* (the lure, or deception).

There is another kind of bull, called the *toro de sentido*. This may be called the mad bull. He runs from right to left, without fixing upon any object. He is very difficult to fight, and as *secunda spada* observed, it requires great art and skill to contend with the *toro sentido*. Then there is the *toro temerero*, the *toro revoltoso*, *etc. etc.* Each requiring a peculiar system of attack, on the part of their assailants.

"One of the greatest difficulties in the *a rear*," said *secunda spada*, "is using the *bandarillas*." The *bandarilla* is a small arrow, having affixed to one end of it, a very sharp iron hook. The address of the *torero* consists in sticking as many of these bandarillas as possible into the bull's flesh. I saw five and twenty, or even thirty stuck into the poor animal. He then runs about, covered with blood, and furious with agony, whilst the circus rings with shouts of applause. Another method is the *lanzudo a pie*. This is very curious. The *matador* kneels down on one knee, in front of the bull, holding in his hand a long lance, made of white wood, which breaks on the least resistance. In this position, he waits until the bull darts upon the lance, which is so aimed that the animal receives the wound between his two eyes. This is certainly a very dangerous feat, but

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not so perilous as sticking the *bandarillas*, on account of the frightful *derrates*,* made by the animal, and by which the *toreros* frequently suffer.

I might write a volume, were I to describe all the various modes of fighting, tormenting and killing the bull; but I have confined myself to those particulars which have for the most part, been passed over unnoticed in descriptions of this favourite national diversion of the Spaniards.

The *Piccadores* are exposed to much less danger than any other class of bull-fighters. They wear a kind of pantaloons, thickly waded with cotton. In general the horse is in greater danger than the man. In the *fiestas reales*, which took place in the reign of Carlos II, twenty horses were sometimes killed in a day. These entertainments which were given on the Plaça Mayor, of Madrid, might truly be called *royal fetes*. All the ambassadors and their suites used to go in their state costumes, and ride round the grand square in their magnificent carriages. Then came the *alguazil mayor* to take possession of the ground. Next the *piccadores*, *toreros*, *matadores*, *chullos*, *siguentes*, *etc.* marched in procession round the grand square, which was to be the arena of the combat. The King then arrived and took his station in the royal balcony, and servants dressed in their state liveries went round to the different balconies presenting to the ladies,on the part of his

* *Derrates* are the thrusts, which the bull makes with his horns, to rid himself of the *bandarillas*.

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majesty, baskets containing perfumed gloves, fans, essences, amber, pastilles, etc. Among the presents thus distributed by his majesty among the ladies, Madame de Villars makes mention of *silk stockings*.

On the occasion of our bull-fight at Ledesma, the rival of Pepe Hillo was attired in a splendid Andalusian dress. The Andalusian costume is worn by all the Spanish bull-fighters. Whether they be *piccadores*, *terreros*, *matadores*, or even *chullos*, they are all dressed like Figaro in the Barber of Seville. The ornaments on their sleeves, and vests are of fine gold, and sometimes set with precious stones. Pepe Hillo, for example, used to wear jewels. *Secunda spada*, as he styled himself, wore on his head a *rézédilla*, and he had a long cloak which he threw on and off, with a grace that would have well become a Spanish cavalier of the olden time. Those who fought on horseback, likewise, had the Andalusian vest; but to protect their legs, they wore pantaloons of buck-skin which had a very inelegant appearance.

Secunda spadà killed three bulls successively, without the necessity of striking a second blow. The mode in which he performed this feat was curious.

When the bull was irritated to the highest pitch of fury, the *matador* gave a signal, and advanced slowly into the lists, holding in one hand his *muleta*,* and in the other his sword, which latter was

* The difference between the *capa* and the *muleta* is that the former is a cloak, whilst the latter is a small red flag fastened to a pole. A considerable degree of grace is sometimes displayed in waving the *muleta*.

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as large as the *Joyeuse* of Charlemagne. The bull then stood for a few moments motionless and in silence, as the animal always does when a new adversary is about to attack him. The *matador* advanced a few paces waving his red flag, and the bull roared, though not loudly and still continued motionless. The *matador* then made a motion with his arm—and the bull immediately darted forward, roaring furiously and ran round the arena, kicking up the dust and stones beneath his feet. He twice darted upon the *torero*, who both times evaded the attack with singular address, by getting on one side. On the third turn made by the bull round the circus, the *matador* waited for him, and turning a little to one side, he plunged his sword into the dorsal spine of the animal. The bull ran a few paces forward, then staggered....The *chullos* gathered round him, but the *matador* with a most triumphant air beckoned them to keep off, saying: " *Dexa la!....dexa la!..*" The blow was mortal, and in another moment the bull fell dead.

This spectacle was exceedingly gratifying to the officers and soldiers. It is calculated only for men, and indeed, for none but military men.

Junot received orders to leave Ledesma, and proceed to San-Felices-el-Grande, whither I accompanied him. The autumn had now set in. Soldiers are always untractable when they are restricted as to regimen; and our troops had disregarded all the orders issued against eating grapes and melons, fruits which are often exceedingly dangerous in Spain. The troops of the 8th

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corps were all attacked by a severe kind of dysentery. The hospitals of Salamanca, Zamora and the neighbouring towns were insufficient for the accommodation of the sick, and it was found necessary to quarter them in private houses. Junot became melancholy, and our abode at San-Felices-el-Grande, served only to increase his depression of spirits.

Our habitation at San-Felices was the most miserable that can well be conceived. The village had been the scene of insurrection and war, and every object in it bore the stamp of desolation. It is situated amidst barren calcareous rocks, devoid of all traces of vegetation. The place contained nothing but hovels half destroyed, houses whose doors had been stripped of their locks, and were closed by clumsy wooden fastenings, and walls blackened by the smoke of bivouac fires. San Felices was several leagues distant from any town where even the commonest necessaries could be procured. Such was the retreat in which I passed a month confined to my bed by illness. I had fortunately brought with me my travelling bed, which together with some other articles of furniture, packed in one of the *fourgons*, afforded the means of preparing a habitable chamber. But the house was dark and damp, and my apartment received the light of the sun only through a small high window, and it had no floor save the bare earth.

The siege of Almeida was at that time going on. Almeida was the first Portuguese fortress, as Ciudad-Rodrigo was the last Spanish one. Massena,

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without observing that Wellington was drawing him into a country, which the inhabitants ruined by deserting, (as was subsequently the case in Russia,) continued to pursue him, though slowly, and exhausting himself at every halt he made before the unfortunate fortresses. The siege of Almeida had been proceeding for some time, when an event, which can scarcely be termed fortunate, decided all at once the fate of the town and of a portion of its inhabitants.

One evening soon after sun-set I felt our house shake violently. I thought it was the shock of an earthquake and was greatly alarmed. In another moment, I heard a noise like a discharge of artillery, and the house was so violently shaken that I thought it would fall.

The soldiers exclaimed: "It is the fortress." And Junot hastened to an old tower, which stood on the summit of a hill at the extremity of the village.

"It is a grand sight," said he, on his return. "Almeida is on fire! you must go and see it Laura. You shall be carried up to the tower."

I was carried to the tower, for I was unable to walk. The spectacle which I beheld was awfully grand. The horizon was lighted up by one vast sheet of flame, while the blue clouds above our heads were thickly be-spangled with bright sparks.

Almeida was almost entirely blown up. This catastrophe was the result of accident. A gunner employed in the French works was about to be released from his post, and had his last grenade to

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throw. He sent it in the direction of the town, without having taken aim, and without even considering what course it was likely to take. The grenade fell before the open gate of the arsenal, just at the moment when about a hundred workmen were employed in making cartridges, and dividing the immense quantity of powder which was in Almeida. The most terrible circumstance was, that numbers of the inhabitants had fled for safety to the fosses of the fortress, and taken refuge in the casemates. Forty families were there at the time of the explosion, and all were victims to the terrible event. The effect of the bomb, or grenade, was such, that the town opened on all sides, and ten breaches enabled the French army to enter it. By the force of the explosion, cannons were thrown into the plain at an inconceivable distance, and the limbs of the sufferers were found at the distance of more than fifty toises from the fortress.

When Junot returned next day to San Felices, after having visited Almeida, he was much shocked at the disastrous results of the unlooked for event. Wherever he went, fragments of human bodies lay scattered amidst the blackened ruins of the fortress, which had been the tomb of so many innocent victims. The gunner took advantage of the accident, and alleged that he intended to direct his projectile on the arsenal, where he knew the ammunition was. But it was very well known to have been entirely the effect of chance. The man nevertheless received the cross of the legion of honour, and a handsome reward. It was an

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English officer, I think General Coxe, who at that time had the command of Almeida.

I continued exceedingly ill, and Junot looked forward with uneasiness to the moment when he would be obliged to separate from me. We had hoped that before my accouchement I might easily return to Valladolid, or even to Madrid. In the latter city, I should have been under the protection of King Joseph, who I knew would receive me kindly. But my return now became impracticable, at least, without an escort of five or six hundred men. Junot mounted his horse and went to consult Massena as to what course he should take, for at that time they were very good friends. My husband expressed his uneasiness at being obliged to leave me at such a moment, surrounded by a thousand dangers, in a desolate village without any means of succour or defence.

"Let the duchess come with us," said Massena.

"Impossible," replied Junot. "She will be confined in about six weeks hence, and she is now extremely ill."

"Well, she must go to Salamanca; that will be the nearest and most commodious place for her."

"No, no," said Junot impatiently, "I cannot leave her at Salamanca. The town may be taken by a *coup-de-main*, and the guerilla chief, Don Julian would be there to capture her immediately. The only place in which my wife can remain with any degree of safety is Ciudad-Rodrigo."

"Ciudad-Rodrigo!" exclaimed Massena with surprise. "Do you know that there is not in the

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whole place a single house with a roof to it. The bombs have perforated or demolished every wall. And besides Ciudad-Rodrigo is nearly depopulated."

"Well," replied Junot, "solitude is better than the society of the guerillas. The duchess shall go to Ciudad-Rodrigo. I have only one favour to ask of you, and that is, that you will permit me to leave with her a hundred and fifty men of the Swiss battalion, they will serve for her guard; and when she is sufficiently recovered to join me, they will be her escort."

Massena readily consented to this proposition. It was indeed a favour, for the army was not very numerous, though by way of boast it was said to be composed of three army corps. Junot returned to San-Felices better satisfied than when he departed. He informed me that I was to remove to Ciudad-Rodrigo, that the army was to commence its march in two days, and that we must then separate.

I now became acquainted with a lady who, during my abode in Spain, was long my companion in misfortune; I allude to the Baroness Thomières. She had accompanied her husband in two campaigns in Portugal. Thomières was a brigadier-general. Junot highly esteemed him, and had entrusted him with an important command during the first expedition. General Thomières had been aide-de-camp to Marshal Lannes. He was now again under the orders of Junot, and he had brought his wife with him. I was not then acquainted with Madame Thomières, and when Junot

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informed me that there was at three leagues distant from San-Felices a young, amiable, and accomplished Frenchwoman, and that she was the wife of one of our generals, I entreated that he would prevail on her to come and remain with me during my approaching confinement. Junot promised to do so. The matter indeed was soon arranged, for Madame Thomières could not very easily follow her husband in his movements. It was understood that Lord Wellington had ordered his troops to destroy and carry away in their retreat on Lisbon, all means of lodging and subsistence. These measures, which infinitely augmented his strength, were very fatal to us. But their ultimate success fully justified them. It was these measures which conquered Massena.

At the commencement of September, the French army began to defile to enter Portugal. Junot and I separated; he to return to Portugal, and I to proceed to Ciudad-Rodrigo. General Cacault, who then commanded the place, had been informed of my intended arrival and prepared a commodious residence for me; that is to say, I was sheltered from the rain, which in the autumn falls in torrents in this part of Spain.

It would be difficult to convey to the reader any adequate idea of the condition of Ciudad-Rodrigo. It presented the appearance of one huge mass of ruins, amongst which only a few houses were standing. These houses were built above enormous colonades which cast a gloom over the

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narrow streets. General Cacault was waiting to receive me at the door of the house which he had assigned for my abode. Its retired situation had saved it from destruction. It belonged to a Canon; but he, like the rest of the inhabitants had fled. None but sick and wounded soldiers were seen crawling about beneath the dark colonades. These poor fellows had been left behind by Massena, and they were more like spectres than men destined to defend a city. Yet they alone were to defend it in case of attack.

Ciudad-Rodrigo is the most wild and barren part of the whole Peninsula. Round its old walls not a tree is to be seen. The neighbouring hills are devoid of verdure or any trace of vegetation. Yet it was to this wretched place, that the court of Spain used in former times to exile those military officers who incurred its displeasure.

But the desolate aspect of the town was not our greatest misfortune:—we had nothing to subsist upon, and handsfull of gold would not procure the most common articles of food. The peasantry had fled, and the neighbouring country was desolate.

I did not hear from Junot for the space of a month, and during that interval we had heard nothing of the army. Such an event was probably never known before. An army of sixty-thousand men had crossed a little river, and on the day after they crossed, their movements were hidden in profound silence. We heard in the distance the guerillas' horn, summoning the rude soldiers to

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the banners of their chiefs; but nothing from the French. It seemed as though they had all been suddenly struck dead.

At length I received a letter which brought me very welcome tidings. It was from Salamanca, and it informed me that my nurse whom I had sent for from France, had arrived in that town. About the middle of October, she had the good fortune to join me at Ciudad-Rodrigo.

One day General Cacault called on me, and told me with an air of mystery, that some important news had been received; that Massena had fought a great battle, and been beaten.

I could not help uttering a shriek.

"Do not alarm yourself," said the general, "the Duke's corps was not engaged. Marshal Ney has been the sufferer, and I hope this will be a lesson to him. He is too arrogant....and now he has got something to humble him."

In spite of the consolatory assurance given me by General Cacault, I was exceedingly uneasy. I could gain no positive tidings of my husband. One day, when I was absorbed in gloomy apprehensions, I was informed that a man wished to speak with me. It was a Portuguese peasant. He brought me a letter from Junot, who well knowing the anxiety I suffered, had written me three letters, and entrusted them to three different peasants, directing me to give them twelve hundred reals on the receipt of the letters. I thought the

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sum small for the happiness it purchased for me. Junot's letter announced the loss of the battle of Busaco.

I must now revert to events of a prior date, in order to explain some circumstances which would otherwise appear obscure.

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CHAPTER V.

Taking of Ciudad-Rodrigo—Severity of Marshal Ney—Indulgence of Massena—Silveira and the Swiss corps—Siege of Astorga—Surrender of the garrison—Rapid march of the 8th corps from Saxony to Spain—Reconnaissances—Disastrous battle of Busaco—Arrival of Junot's letter—Madame Thomières—M. Lhuyyt and M. Desanges—An unexpected arrival—Count d'Erlon—Eugene de Montesquiou—General Fournier—Scanty provisions in Ciudad-Rodrigo—Ingenious device of my cook—My accouchement—My son's name—Departure from Ciudad-Rodrigo—A duel—My Swiss guards.

THE taking of Ciudad-Rodrigo was an event of the highest importance to Massena in the campaign for which he was preparing. The surrender of that place promised to smooth away difficulties, which opposed the invasion of Portugal by the French. The garrison resisted for one month after the opening of the first trench, and the commandant, General Hervasti, capitulated when it was in vain to hold out longer. The place

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surrendered on the 10th July, and Marshal Ney, to whom Massena had consigned the command of the siege, treated the garrison with great severity, though it had nobly defended itself. He refused to grant any conditions, but Massena who was commander-in-chief, had the generosity or the policy to allow the troops to march out with the honours of war. He then began to think of combining his forces with the view of marching on Portugal. General Reignier was marching to join the army of Portugal, having passed the Tagus to effect his junction with Junot and Ney. Massena having united his three army corps, divided his forces, as though he had been planing vast operations ; but Junot was of opinion that the best thing he could have done, was to allow Reignier's corps (the 2nd,) to attack General Hill's division, in order to prevent the junction of the English forces. General Hill was then I believe at Castel Branco. The advantages, therefore, of striking a decisive blow at this juncture at the British army, were sufficiently obvious. The English, under General Crawford had been defeated in the neighbourhood of Almeida ; Ciudad-Rodrigo had been taken ; we had obliged the English to blow up fort Conception, and the fortress of Almeida was ours. All accounts concurred in stating that the Anglo-Portuguese army was retiring before us, and preparing for a more decided retreat. Under this view of things, Massena might seem to have been justified in acting as he did. But still the impregnable lines of Torres-Vedras were in view, and the country which was

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to be crossed to reach them, had been entirely laid waste. I heard Junot remark before he left San-Felices-el-Grande, that it would be very fortunate if the army returned with but one-fourth of its numbers.

About this time we received a piece of intelligence, which was the more unacceptable, because we had so long been unaccustomed to reverses of fortune. Silveira's troops, on whom an attack was made at Parba, proved victorious, and took from us a whole Swiss battalion. The numerical loss of the men, five hundred in all, was but of little moment; but the moral effect of this disaster was very great.

I may here allude to one of the petty intrigues which prevented Massena from acting as he wished to do. He alleged that all Catalonia, Aragon and a portion of Andalusia, being entirely liberated, attention should be exclusively directed to the English army, with the view of obliging it to evacuate the Peninsula. He therefore earnestly requested that Marshal Mortier should be dispatched with the greater portion of his force to join him. But Joseph was unwilling to weaken the besieging force of Cadiz, which then had before its walls a fine and numerous army. Massena nevertheless determined to pursue the English without the reinforcement he had demanded. The English army was at this time above 60,000 strong, including the Portuguese troops; for all the English troops, which were in the Peninsula, were not with Lord Wellington. A

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very numerous corps was shut up in Cadiz, and the force immediately under Lord Wellington, and now before Massena, might amount to about 30,000 men, cavalry, infantry and artillery. The residue of Wellington's army, under the command of Generals Hill and Leith was detached, I believe, in the direction of Almazar and Coria. As to our army, it was not more numerous than the English, though it was represented as amounting to 60,000 men. It consisted but of the three corps of Junot, Ney and Reignier, and these were much thinned by disease, and the partial engagements which had already taken place.

The 8th corps, a great part of which had just arrived in Spain from Germany, remained at Burgos, from the 11th of February to the 24th, when it marched for Valladolid. It arrived in that ancient capital of Spain on the 1st of March.

On the 12th of March the fortress of Astorga was blockaded. On the 17th the trenches were opened, and the works proceeded with activity. Junot departed for Valladolid on the 14th. He established his head-quarters at Castrillo de los Polbazes, and reconnoitred the fortress of Astorga on the 19th. On the 20th, the fire was vigorously kept up from five in the morning till seven in the evening, and the breach was then effected. On the 21st of April the breach was taken by assault by M. de la Grave, a brave young officer, one of Junot's aides-de-camp. Astorga capitulated on the 22nd and the garrison, amounting to four thousand men, marched off in the direction

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of France, with General Santasildes, the commandant of the fortress. The army corps received orders to return to its cantonments, and Junot went back to Valladolid. It is a curious fact, that most of the troops, composing the 8th corps, were in the month of November cantoned on the frontiers of Saxony, and that in the March following they were at the siege of Astorga, in the heart of the kingdom of Leon.

It was on his return to Valladolid that Junot learned the nomination of Massena. On the 29th, he set out for Salamanca, where the 2d division had already arrived with its park of artillery; the 1st division was at Ledesma, and the 3rd at Zamora and Toro. This movement was for supplying the place of the 6th corps, commanded by Ney, which was advancing on Ciudad-Rodrigo, to commence the siege. At the same time, the troops of the 3d division were taking up positions at Bejar, Eudrinal, Linaros and Col de Banos. All remained stationary until the 10th of June, when a false alarm was raised of the English attempting to recover Astorga. Clauzel's and Salignac's divisions then received orders to march thither; but on the 11th the order was revoked, with the announcement, that a movement would be made on San-Felices-el-Grande, and el Chico, to support the 6th corps, which was commencing operations against Ciudad-Rodrigo.

On the 24th, Junot left Salamanca for Santi-Espiritus, whence he proceeded to San-Felices al Chico. He passed the Agueda, and reconnoitred

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the Anglo-Portuguese army. Several little engagements ensued. Generals Menard and Taupin effectively supported him with their brigades; but Junot, whenever he was reconnoitering, gave his horse the rein, and disregarded danger. Thus at the reconnaissance of Almeida on the 15th July, of which Junot was at the head, four of the party were killed, and fifteen wounded, of whom seven were officers. In this affair, however, the enemy suffered severely. During the first fifteen days of September, the 8th corps had continued its movement, taking advantage of our occupation of Almeida and Ciudad Rodrigo, to march into Portugal. Since the 23rd August, Clausel's division had occupied Barba del Puerco, and the 6th corps had passed the Coa, and was advancing to Pinhel. It was at this juncture that the English army, in its turn, made that movement which seemed to be the effect of fear, but which was in fact a snare laid for us; Lord Wellington retired upon Guarda and Celerico.

After the 15th, I knew nothing of the campaign from personal observation, for Junot left me to go to Portugal, and I returned to Ciudad-Rodrigo. The 8th corps took the road to Viseu; and, with its numbers thinned by famine and fatigue, it arrived on the 27th of September at the foot of the Sierra d'Alcoba, where it bivouacked during the night. On the following morning ensued that dreadful engagement, in which the army of Portugal lost so many fine men and excellent officers, merely for the gratification of a headstrong whim.

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I have heard from English and Portuguese officers who were made prisoners in Spain, that Lord Wellington was extremely astonished at Massena's taking the route of Viseu, and the right of the Mondego, because that road was so very bad, that it had been judged impracticable, especially for artillery. On ascertaining Massena's route, Wellington, who had retired from Celerico and taken up another position, re-crossed the Mondego and established himself at Busaco; a circumstance the most unfortunate for us, and which it was said might have been prevented.

Busaco is a very high mountain, on the summit of which is situated the convent of Busaco, once occupied by trappist monks. This mountain is about four French leagues in extent from the banks of the Mondego to the Oporto road, and is completely covered by deep precipices and defiles, so narrow that even goats cannot pass them two or three abreast. Yet through these defiles Massena conducted his troops, instead of taking them along the road of Mealhada, and thus gaining an opportunity of turning the left of the English army.

The Marquis of Londonderry, in his work on the Peninsula war, says: "that had Massena acted under the advice of the Duke of Wellington, he could not have done anything better calculated to procure his own defeat."

But a fact, which was not known at this time in France, because the silence of the tomb enveloped the unfortunate events of Busaco, was

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the intrepidity of the regiments who were employed in making the first attack on the 27th: under the command of General Merle, they endeavoured to force the position occupied by the English. These brave fellows, in defiance of a shower of grape shot which poured among them, spreading death in all directions, ascended to the summit of the plateau, where they were met by destruction in a more certain shape; for here they found the English and Portuguese troops drawn up to meet them. Our soldiers, fatigued by their previous exertions, were repulsed by the enemy, and amidst the most frightful carnage, were driven down the rocks they had with so much difficulty ascended.

On the day after the battle of Busaco, Junot, who knew that I had arrived at Ciudad-Rodrigo, despatched three peasants, each with a letter to me. Only one of these men arrived at Ciudad-Rodrigo, the two others perished; the one in crossing a torrent and the other by assassination.

The date of Junot's letter was a month old before it reached me. "What," thought I, "may have transpired since it was written....And what could I write to him in return." Since I had been at Ciudad-Rodrigo, I had only once heard from my children; for Don Julian kept possession of the road by which the couriers came from France.

The general who had the command of Ciudad-Rodrigo was as disagreeable as it was possible for a man to be. I had no society but that of

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Madame Thomières who was as miserable as myself, and who stood more in need of consolation, because she had less fortitude to bear her sufferings. There was a gentleman at Ciudad-Rodrigo, whose society might have been a great resource to us. This was M. de Lhuyyt, who had been the French minister of the marine and war department during the first invasion of Portugal. He was a man of talent and agreeable manners; but unfortunately he was the victim of an incessant dread of poignards, poison and all the many dangers of Spanish insurrections. Yet M. Lhuyyt was not deficient in courage or strength of mind. He was a man of the world, had seen much, and read much. Nevertheless, he was the victim of an illness which had no other origin than the constant terror by which his mind was disturbed. I was too indisposed to pay him a visit, for I scarcely went out, even to take the air, and I had not seen him since my arrival at Ciudad-Rodrigo; but I know that he was kindly attended upon by his friend, M. Desanges.

One day about the middle of November, the weather being fair, though cold, I ordered the horses to be put to my calèche, and engaged Madame Thomières to take an airing with me as far as the little wall which was beyond the gate of Salamanca. Two or three pickets had been stationed on the plain, and for an hour at least, I was thus enabled to breathe fresher air, than ever penetrated into Ciudad-Rodrigo. M. Lhuyyt had summoned up sufficient courage to follow us in his calèche, while

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M. Desanges escorted us, mounted on horseback. We were leisurely enjoying our drive, when one of our most advanced pickets came in haste to inform us that he had seen at a distance, in the defile which terminated the plain, a numerous body of troops. Our first impulse was to turn our horses heads, and make the best of our way back to Ciudad-Rodrigo. But then we began to reflect that the Spaniards who approached the town almost daily, never came in that direction, but always by the heights. M. Desanges perceiving our uneasiness, immediately spurred his horse, and without giving us the least intimation, set off alone to reconnoitre the party. We called to him to return; but in vain, for he was a man of singular courage. As we followed him with our eyes, we saw him clear the plain with the swiftness of an arrow; suddenly he slackened his course and joined the military, whom we had perceived in the distance.

The greater portion of the party then started off at a gallop and made directly towards us, while as they advanced, the arms of the men and accoutrements of the horses glittered in the sun.

"Heavens!" cried I, "these are French troops."

Hardly had I spoken, when my calèche was surrounded by those uniforms, which then used to make every French heart beat with pride and joy, as it made those of our enemies tremble. My hand was instantly pressed by my amiable friend Eugene de Montesquiou, the brave General Drouet, and

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twenty kind voices inquired how I had been since I had sojourned in this Thebean desert. Oh! what joy at that moment filled my bosom.

General Cacault now came up. "How is it," said I, "that you did not inform me of the general's arrival?" pointing at the same time to the Count d'Erlon.

"It was a secret, Madam."

"A secret! are these gentlemen all you have with you?" I enquired of General Fournier who just then was at the carriage side.

"We have with us 20,000 men," replied the general, "and we are going to join the Prince d'Essling, Duke of Rivoli."*

General Fournier was a singular man, and I shall presently describe him more in detail.

I returned to the town with my brilliant escort. M. Lhuyyt anticipated, as well, and perhaps more correctly than I did, the happy results which were likely to ensue from the arrival of Count d'Erlon. Alas! the horizon which then dawned so radiantly was soon overclouded.

I engaged all the party to dine at my house.

"I have but indifferent cheer to offer you," said I, "but unless you have brought provisions with you, mine will at least not be the worst dinner you may get."

The fact is, that for a fortnight previously, Don Julian had been so active, that the country people

* There was about a third of this number, but he afterwards told me jokingly that it was necessary to deceive one's enemies, and even one's friends occasionally.

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could not convey any provisions to the town. We were sometimes obliged to pay seven and eight reals a piece for eggs. Fowls were not only at a price beyond all reason, but it was difficult to procure them at all. Butcher's meat was intolerably bad and exceedingly dear. Bread was the only article which was of good quality, and of which we had enough. As to vegetables and fruit we had almost lost all recollection of them. The gardens had been destroyed during the siege, and had not been replanted. The following circumstance may perhaps form an idea of the style of our living. My cook being mortified at not being able to furnish my table with any thing better than wretched bouillon, sent a man to the bastions to shoot a species of birds dignified by the name of larks, but which were in fact execrable sparrows, tough, bitter and of a disagreeable flavour. The cook, however, served them up on a silver dish, garnished with *croûtes*, and was as happy as if he had dished me up ortolans or becaficos.

I entertained my guests until eleven o'clock in the evening, when they left me.

On the following day, after a most dangerous accouchement, I gave birth to a boy, who at the present day contributes to augment the little happiness which heaven has yet left to me.

I have spoken before of Madame de Thomières, the wife of General Thomières, who during the first invasion of Portugal was under the orders of Junot. On the third expedition he joined the eighth corps, while Junot was at Burgos. The

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duke esteemed him highly. In 1808 he entrusted him with the command of Peniches, in Portugal; one of the most important points of the army. During the first campaign his wife accompanied him. Her affection for him was most tender and devoted.

Madame Thomières was a year or two older than I. She was a pretty woman, of fair complexion, and a sweet and benevolent expression of countenance. Her graceful and modest manner heightened her personal attractions. Her conversation derived a peculiar charm from the sweet tone of her voice, and her correct accentuation. She was well educated, and her information was more extensive than was usual among women at that time. She could draw and paint in excellent style, and was a proficient in all those branches of ornamental needle work, for which her small white fingers were so peculiarly well adapted.

For two whole months I had received no news from France. The estafettes always went straight to Junot, and my letters were in the army packet, or at least, that of the 8th corps, for it had never occurred to me to write to France to have my letters sent directly to myself. Since the affair of Busaco I had received no intelligence of my husband, and in consequence, I was a prey to every kind of apprehension. Since my accouchement, I had, however, been much easier in my mind, and the care of my infant was a fresh source of consolation to me. Junot had expressed a wish that I should name the child Rodrigo.

"Name him Rodrigo," said he, "and the name

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will recal to him the recollection of what his mother has suffered."

I at first intended to name him Rodrigo; but the name did not please me, and I had him christened Alfred.

Eugène de Montesquiou fell a victim to a brain fever, shortly after his departure from Ciudad-Rodrigo. On the evening when he dined at my house he had sad presages of his fate, and they were unhappily realized. The unfortunate presentiment of his death, under which he laboured, no doubt hastened his end. He lingered but eight or nine days.

While I was absorbed in grief at this event, an annoying circumstance occurred. General Cacault sent one day to M. Magnien, and informed him, after some circumlocution, that he had been much straightened for provisions, and that the arrival of the Count d'Erlon having exhausted all his stores, he felt himself under the necessity of requesting me to remove to Salamanca, with my Swiss guards.

This was precisely what I wished to do. My only difficulty was to undertake a journey so soon after my accouchement.

"I will go," said I, "on horseback. That mode of travelling will be more endurable, than being jolted in a carriage on these horrible roads."

There was then at Ciudad-Rodrigo a man whose kind heartedness had become almost proverbial in the army. This person was a general of artillery of the imperial guard, named Coin. He was no

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longer young and had never been handsome; but he was so obliging that those disadvantages were lost sight of. This gentleman requested me to allow him to escort me to Salamanca.

"You will see," said he, "that when the brigands know you are accompanied by a general officer, they will be cautious of venturing to attack you. They will take us for an advanced guard."

I accepted the offer with thankfulness, as may easily be believed. M. Lhuyyt and M. Desanges undertook the arrangement of the plan of route for their friend, and the amiable Agatha, (Madame Thomières) accompanied us. She refused to leave me. She had lost her only child; her mother, and her husband were now all that remained to her.

"Oh, if I should lose him!" would she sometimes ejaculate. Alas! she did lose him.

We left Ciudad-Rodrigo on our journey to Salamanca on the 25th November. General Cacault was the cause of a disaster to us, in consequence of giving his orders in an obscure and confused way. He had an aide-de-camp named M. Angier, a son of M. Angier of La Saushaye, a man of much talent and information. He had married a lady, previously well known by the name of Mademoiselle Lapleigne. She was the mother of one of the Emperor's sons, who takes the title of Count of Leon. M. Angier accompanied us to the gate of Ciudad-Rodrigo where I saw him at the moment of my departure from that town, indulging the sweet hope of never again returning to it. I con-

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ceived that he had been stationed there merely as a mark of respect on the part of the general; but no such thing. I found that M. Angier had been directed to conduct me to Salamanca, and that in consequence of orders from his general, he had stationed himself at the head of the column. All this was done without speaking to me, or saying one word on the subject either to Magnien or to General Coin.

My Swiss guard was commanded by an officer of great merit, who had been selected for that post by Junot himself on his departure. This gentleman, perceiving the authority assumed by M. Angier, asked him his business. Angier made a reply, which perhaps savoured too much of flippancy. The Swiss grew angry, and some high words passed between them; the one asserting that he was the lawful commander of the troops, and the other replying that he had received orders from his general to escort me to Salamanca, and that he would escort me.

The result of their altercation was of a serious nature. They retired to the back of one of the walls of the town and fought with their sabres. M. Angier received a cut, full in his forehead. When the affair was ended, they sent to me to enquire who should take the command. I said that I was very sorry that M. Angier, whom I scarcely knew, should have received such a reward for his exertions in my service, but that I could not permit him to command my escort. This privilege

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I observed, belonged to the commander of my guard, and besides there was General Coin who was entitled to a preference before any other. M. Augier then returned to get his wound dressed, and I proceeded on my journey to Alba-di-Tormes and Salamanca under the protection of my brave Swiss guard.

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CHAPTER VI.

General Thiebault succeeds General Lagrange as commander of Salamanca—The woods of Matilla—The robbers' cavern described in Gil Blas—Imprudence of the soldiers—My alarm and mistake—Unexpected rencontre with General Thiebault—My arrival at Salamanca—Letters from France—The Duchy of Oldenburgh—Remarkable expressions of the Emperor Alexander—The Marshal's baton in Tarragona—Maria Louisa—Cardinal Maury's description of her—*Soirées* at the Tuileries—Maria Louisa's ear—Male visitors prohibited—Bennais, the goldsmith—Junot's wound—Letter from the Duke of Wellington to Junot.

General Lagrange, who had been commander of Salamanca, was superseded in that post by General Thiebault, to whom King Joseph entrusted the seventh government. The excellent way in which General Thiebault had directed affairs in Old Castille, when he was governor of Burgos, fully justified the most implicit confidence. But there was another reason for this confidence: Thiebault had been with Massena. He knew the man and knew how to manage him; and this was a very important consideration at that moment, when the disunion of some, and the insubordination of others, certainly accelerated our disasters in the Peninsula.

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The arrival of the 9th corps had greatly improved the road from Salamanca to Ciudad-Rodrigo, yet it was far from being safe. Musket shots were fired on some of our men on the first evening of our march. We had under our safeguard a small convoy of invalids, whom General Cacault wished to send to Salamanca, as they were very ill accommodated at Ciudad-Rodrigo. The slow rate at which the invalid waggons were driven, exposed us to some risk from the firing of the guerillas; but another circumstance had well nigh proved more fatal to us.

The weather was very gloomy on the second day of our journey. It may well be imagined that I, who had just risen from my *accouchement*, suffered not a little from the fatigue of riding forty leagues on horseback, over the most dreadful roads. I was therefore naturally anxious to reach Salamanca as early as possible on the following day. To accomplish this object, it was necessary to pass through the woods of Matilla, one of the most dangerous parts of Spain.* Unluckily General Coin so arranged our route that we entered the woods of Matilla at night-fall.

I have, I think, in a former portion of my Memoirs alluded to the gloomy aspect of a wood in Spain, especially in the north; and the Asturias, Leon and Old Castille may be said to be in the north, compared with the rest of the

* The robber's cavern described in Gil-Blas is in the neighbourhood of Matilla.

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Peninsula. The impression produced by entering a thick forest of the green Spanish oaks is the most melancholy I ever experienced. On this occasion, I felt a more than usual depression of spirits.

The Spaniards have such an aversion for every thing like a *road*, that they not only neglect the few good ones which their governments have provided for them, but they endeavour to destroy those which nature has made through the woods. They cut down their trees to within a foot of the ground, so that the roots produce little risings, against which horses' feet are continually stumbling. This was extremely dangerous, for the small light calèche in which my infant was drawn. I felt very uneasy; and the soldiers who were near me, anxious to relieve my inquietude, fell upon a scheme which unluckily proved the cause of a very serious alarm.

In Spain there is no grass in these dark forests of oak trees. The ground is covered by a sort of fern which, at the time of our journey to Salamanca, was quite dry. The soldiers gathered up several bundles of this fern, struck their flints and set light to it. The muleteer who drove my child's calèche could then distinctly see where he was going. I also could keep my horse from stumbling, and I heartily thanked the soldiers for their clever contrivance. But this was not all:—the whole battalion, the muleteers who drove the waggons, in short, all the little convoy followed the example, and in the space of a few moments our line was

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brilliantly illuminated. All this was done so speedily that General Coin, who was at the head of the column, had not time to prevent the imprudence which might have cost us our lives. The fact is, that a party of guerillas might with the utmost ease have come within musket shot of us, before we could even have seen them; for they would have been protected by the shade, whilst the light which we had so unthinkingly welcomed, would only have aided our destruction.

We were advancing towards Matilla, lighted by our torches of fern, which the soldiers continually renewed, when suddenly the surrounding silence was broken by the galloping of horses and a cry of *halt!* Next came a confused sound of voices. Of what was said, I heard nothing. My alarm conjured up a frightful vision. I thought we were attacked, and that my infant and myself were made prisoners by the guerillas. The illusion was short, but terrible. I was roused from my dream by the sound of friendly voices—the voices of my countrymen. I was surrounded by protectors when I thought myself lost. In short, General Thiebault on learning that I had set out on my hazardous expedition, had come to meet me. Fortunately he arrived in time to flank the road in the neighbourhood of Matilla.

We completed the remainder of our journey in perfect security. We slept that night at Matilla, and arrived next morning at Salamanca.

I had a large house assigned to me in a very retired part of the town. Marshal Ney had pre-

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viously resided in it. It was but scantily furnished, but Thiebault had ordered every thing to be done to render it as commodious as possible, and I was perfectly satisfied. Madame Thomières was likewise very comfortably lodged, and certainly I had no reason to repent of having chosen Salamanca as my place of abode.

The letters which I received from France brought me a mass of intelligence, of the most extraordinary kind; for the fact is, I received all at once letters which had been successively forwarded to me during an interval of many months. They exhibited a curious *mélange* of successes, reverses, losses, aggrandizements, disgraces and favours. First there was the disgrace of Fouché, of which I had not previously heard;*—next the taking of the Isle of France by the English!—then the pompous opening of the Canal of St. Quentin;—then the union of the Hans Towns, Holland, and several small states with the French Empire. About the same time, we took possession of Valais, which was merely termed *a department*. The French Empire then extended from the 54th to the 42nd degree of latitude.

All the letters I received concurred on one point: viz. that the Emperor was greatly changed, in every respect, since his marriage. His position was of a nature to produce in his mind some degree of inquietude. The more the colossus of the Empire encreased,—the further it extended its

* I here allude to Fouché's disgrace in 1810.

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gigantic members around—the more anxiety it was likely to excite in him, who had created so extraordinary, and glorious a power. Affairs had reached that critical point when even a conquest was but a triumph, mingled with alarm. For example, when Napoleon took possession of the Duchy of Oldenburgh, he did so for the furtherance of his continental system, and his continental blockade of all the coast of the North Sea. But the Emperor Alexander could not be satisfied by these motives. The deposed Prince was his brother-in-law; and when he heard of the event he angrily exclaimed:—"The Emperor Napoleon is much too selfish.... .."—These words are the more remarkable inasmuch as they were uttered in the year preceding the disasters of Russia.

Suchet took Tortosa after the trenches had been open thirteen days. The garrison was numerous, and well supplied with provisons and ammunition.—"Now," said the Emperor, "the Marshal's baton is in Tarragona." These were magical words. Suchet besieged Tarragona, and it fell; though we purchased the conquest by a considerable loss.

The letters which I received from my friends in Paris naturally made mention of the new Empress. The most various opinions were pronounced upon her; Cardinal Maury sent me a letter in which he said:—

"I will not attempt to describe how much the

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Emperor is attached to our charming Empress. This time he may be said to be really in love; more truly in love than he ever was with Josephine, for after all, he never saw her while she was very young. She was upwards of thirty when they were married. But Maria Louisa is as young and as blooming as spring. You will be enchanted with her when you see her."

Maria Louisa's brilliant complexion particularly charmed the cardinal. For my own part, I did not see her till after her *accouchement*, and even then, though I was told that she had grown pale, I thought she had too much colour, especially when in the least heated.

The cardinal was a great admirer of Maria Louisa, though he had wished the Emperor to marry one of the Russian Grand-Duchesses. "The Empress," added he, "in the letter above mentioned, is gay, gracious, and I may even say *familiar*, with those persons whom the Emperor permits her to receive in her intimate circle; her manners are charming to those who are admitted to the *petites soirées* at the Tuileries. Their Majesties play with the company at reversis or billiards. I really wish that you and the Duke could see how happy the Emperor is."

I was informed by other friends that one of the amusements of the imperial *soirées*, before the Emperor entered the *salon*, was to see the Empress turn her ear round; for by a movement of the muscles of the jaw, she possessed the singular

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power of making her ear turn round of itself, almost in a circle. I never heard of any one except Maria-Louisa who could do this.

The Emperor wished to remove as far as was consistent with etiquette, a frequent cause of dissension between him and the Empress Josephine, namely, the numerous visitors received by the latter. Maria Louisa was young and ignorant of the usages of the world, and though accustomed to a great deal of court etiquette, yet her private circle had been limited to the members of her own family. Thus the rules prescribed by the Emperor neither surprised nor displeased her. One of these rules was, that she should receive no male visiters. Paer was the only exception, because he was her music master; and yet it was ordered that one of the Empresses ladies should be present while she received her lesson. One day, while the court was at St. Cloud, the Emperor unexpectedly presented himself in the Empress's apartments. He perceived a man, whose countenance he did not at first recognize. This violation of his rule displeased him, and he expressed himself rather angrily to the *dame de service*, who I think was Madame Brignolé. She replied that the gentleman was Bennais,* who had come himself to explain the secret spring of a *serre-papier* which he had been making for her Majesty.

"No matter," said the Emperor, "he is a

* Bennais was goldsmith to the Emperor.

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man. My orders on this subject must not be departed from ; or we shall soon have no rules."

During my abode at Salamanca, I received intelligence of Junot's wound. It was brought to me by a young officer, a nephew of Casabianca, the senator. He likewise delivered to me a letter from Junot, but it was scarcely legible ; it had been written about two hours before the operation.

" I have been wounded," said Junot in his letter, " in the face by a ball, which broke my nose, and entered my right cheek, where it was stopped by striking against the bone. It is a lucky escape, for had the wound been half an inch higher up, or more in front, I should have been killed. As it is, I shall only have to keep my bed some days, and to suffer a few minutes' pain on the extraction of the ball."

On the 14th of November, Massena began to retire before the Duke of Wellington, but it was not until the month of January that he fully determined on his retreat. He then wished to mislead the English by making hostile demonstrations, and continuing them on the left flank of the enemy's army. The Duke of Wellington was not to be caught in this snare, which indeed would scarcely have entrapped a young sub-lieutenant. Unluckily he knew too well the precarious and unfortunate condition of the French army. He opposed to the grand reconnaissance which Junot commanded in person, the Brunswick chasseurs, the Hanoverian foot chasseurs, and some squadrons of

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other troops. Junot, accompanied by General Boyer, his principal staff officer, was on horse-back, at a little distance from Rio-Mayor in front of a very thick forest. He was in his full uniform, and wore his grand cordon. One of the Brunswick chasseurs, posted in the forest, fired at him with a carabine, and the ball entered exactly in the middle of the nose. Junot did not fall; he merely raised his hand to his face and said:

"Parbleu, Boyer, these fellows are better marksmen than you. They shoot a man better than you can shoot a hare."

He attempted to ride on, but the blood flowed so copiously, that in a few moments he felt faint. He was taken from his horse, and conveyed to the village of Rio-Mayor. There he fainted away. There was an enclosed piece of ground near at hand; he was conveyed there and laid on a bank of turf. The chief surgeon of the army arrived and placed a first dressing on the wound. Junot fainted a second time, whilst the bleeding was being stopped. On coming to himself, he was observed to shudder. He had been carried into a churchyard, and the bank on which he was reposing was a grave!

The operation of extracting the ball could not be performed till next day. M. Malraison, the chief surgeon of the eighth corps, arrived to perform the operation. To his astonishment he could not discover where the ball was. At length, after some search, it was discovered to have lodged in the round part of the maxilliary bone of the left

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cheek. The bones of the nose were separated, but not broken. The aim must have been taken with singular precision. The ball had penetrated so deeply into the cheek bone, that the incision produced by the pincers on the ball is still discernable.

When M. Malraison had discovered the ball, and was about to commence the operation, he asked Junot whether he would like the ball to be extracted internally or externally ; the latter mode, he observed would leave a scar on the face.

" Never mind," said Junot, whenever he was informed that there might be some doubt of the healing of the wound in the inside of the mouth. " A scar more or less is no matter to me. I shall even be vain of it."

After all, the wound, though its consequences were serious, left but faint traces externally. Junot was but slightly altered by his two scars ; a slight protuberance on his nose was the principle disfigurement.

On the subject of Junot's wound, I must relate an anecdote highly honourable to Lord Wellington, and which shews his disposition in a most favourable point of view.

The French army was in full retreat at the moment when Junot received his wound. Desertions were very frequent among the French, and the nature of the country, enabled the enemy to gain abundant information, while we were entirely cut off from it ; so that the English perfectly well knew the state of our affairs, whilst we were ig-

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norant of theirs, and even of our own. Lord Wellington knew every thing. He was aware of all the misfortunes which had assailed Massena's army, and a scarcity of provisions was one of these misfortunes. This knowledge of our miserable condition prompted the Duke of Wellington to shew to a man whom he esteemed, and by whom he was in his turn esteemed, a mark of attention, which claims my deepest gratitude. He addressed to the Duke d'Abrantes, whose troops were almost touching his, a letter, of which the following is a copy.

Head Quarters, January 27th, 1811.

" Sir,

" I learn with great regret that you have been wounded; and I beg you will let me know whether I can send you anything that may be of use for dressing your wound, or accelerating your recovery.

" I do not know whether you have lately heard from the Duchess. At the end of last month she was delivered of a son at Ciudad-Rodrigo. She left that place for Salamanca, and intended to proceed to France at the beginning of this month.*

" I have the honour to remain, Sir, your very obedient servant.

" WELLINGTON."

* Considerations of safety, which it is unnecessary to detail here, led me to circulate the report that I intended to return to France at the beginning of January.

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Junot gratefully thanked Lord Wellington for his kindness, but declined availing himself of the offer contained in his letter. As to what concerned me, he replied that he had heard of my accouchement. The fact is, he had known it since the 25th of December, the day on which Count d'Erlon had joined Massena.

The letter above mentioned is sufficient to explain the marked attention with which I received the Duke of Wellington on his arrival in Paris. Had Junot then been governor of the capital, assuredly the Duke of Wellington would have entered it only after passing over his body; yet before he drew his last breath, Junot would have cordially pressed the hand of his noble and generous enemy.

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CHAPTER VII.

My soirées at Salamanca—Music and Chess—General Thiebault's musical talent—M. Jules de Canouville—Berthier and the Mazurka—Queen Hortense's Ball—Talma—Gianni—The Princess—Berthier's staff—The Emperor of Russia's sable skins—The review—The huzzar-uniform—M. de Canouville ordered to Spain—His unexpected visit to me—His return to Paris—His second banishment.

LENT had now commenced; but our carnival had been so dull, that we experienced but little curtailment of our amusements. Every evening I had a little party. General Thiebault and all the French authorities, as well as many Spaniards, used to assemble at my house, and amuse themselves with conversation, music and chess. The Marquis de Valença, the best amateur musician I ever knew, used to sing and accompany himself on the pianoforte. Sometimes he would accompany General Fournier, who with an exquisite voice used to sing without the least skill. Then General Thiebault, himself, who was a consummate musician, and who published a valuable work on music, used to bring us romances of his own composition. These we used to sing, and criticise, but our discussions never assumed the

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tone of disputation, an instance of great self-restraint on the part of General Fournier who was very fond of argument. At other times we would read the papers brought from France, nor did we scruple to communicate the contents of the letters each wrote to their friends. Chess filled up the remainder of our time, and the soirée usually passed off agreeably enough.

One evening, I recollect I was concluding a game at chess with General Thiebault, to which, as I was losing, I paid the more attention; nor could the buzz of conversation which filled the room divert my mind from the game. I was, however, suddenly startled by a voice, which in a tone it is impossible to describe, cried:—

"For pity's sake, give shelter to a poor traveller!"

The voice proceeded from a room adjoining my *salon*. Knowing that some of the servants were there, I paid but little attention to what I heard, thinking they were amusing themselves. But after the lapse of a few minutes, the attention of every one was roused by the following words, uttered in a still louder and more suppliant tone:

"Madame la Duchesse, take pity on an unfortunate traveller, who is dying of fatigue and hunger."

"Heavens," I exclaimed, "I know that voice."

I rose from my chair and run to the door, where to my amazement I beheld my friend Jules de Canouville kneeling down, with clasped hands

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and assuming the most comical expression of humility.

" Is it possible," exclaimed I, " Jules de Canouville ! what has brought you here ?"

" I am a suppliant," said he ; " will you let me in and give me a supper ?"

" Certainly," said I, " rise and come in !"

He advanced into the *salon* with the drollest air imaginable. He told us he had ridden from Paris at *full gallop ;* and truly he was covered with mud from head to foot. His beautiful pelisse was torn and splashed ; his hair was in a most fantastic state of disorder, and his whole appearance so absurdly pathetic, that I could not restrain a fit of laughter, in which all my friends heartily joined.

" It is no laughing matter to me," observed M. de Canouville ; then taking me by the hand, and piteously shaking his head, he said, " Only imagine my distress and disappointment, when I tell you, that I, the most indefatigable dancer in Paris, and I may add one of the most agreeable partners, should be ordered off on the *mardi-gras*, of all days in the year ! Queen Hortense was to give a delightful ball that very night. How can the prince allow his officers to be sent to this murderous country, while the notes of the Mazurka are resounding in his ear ?"

This was irresistible ! Berthier gravely accused of being insensible to the charms of the Mazurka, and sending off his aides-de-camp on the night of a ball ! This produced a general burst of laughter.

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As to Canouville he was perfectly serious, and as thoughtful as if he had been trying to solve a problem of Euclid.

"And where are you going?" I enquired.

"I am going in search of Marshal Massena, Prince of Essling and Duke of Rivoli. I must try and discover what has become of him; for nothing is known of him in Paris. Both he and his army seem to be lost. But, my dear Duchess, do pray order me some supper!"

Supper was speedily announced, and we sat down to table. It was amusing to see how my half starved guest devoured every thing within his reach. He talked all the time; but between one mouthful and another, it was scarcely possible to connect the meaning of what he said. I was naturally eager to hear news from Paris, and I put question after question to him, but without obtaining any satisfactory answer. He talked of Talma, who was teaching him French declamation; of Gianni, who was teaching him to improvise in Italian; of the Emperor and the Princess, the latter was his favourite theme; "The Princess," as General Fournier observed, "was his *grand cheval de bataille.*"

When we returned to the drawing room, he related to me a history in which he himself figured, in rather a curious way. He was a very handsome young man, and his talents and accomplishments rendered him a distinguished favourite in the fashionable circles of Paris. If, in telling me his story, he made some few deviations from

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the truth, I afterwards learned from another quarter the correct version of it.

Though the Emperor, of course, had it in his power to form the staff of the Prince de Neufchatel, by any appointments he might think proper to make, yet it is certain that among the young aides-de-camp of the major-general, there were very few who had the good fortune to please Napoleon; and the more they were distinguished for their personal appearance, and agreeable manners, the more he seemed to dislike them. MM. Jules de Canouville, Fritz Courtales, Alexandre de Gerardin, Achille de Septeuil, Sopranzi, Ferreri, Lecouteulx-Cauteleux, Flahaut, and several other elegant young officers, who composed Berthier's staff, appeared to come under the Emperor's anathema. It is certain that his prejudice against Jules de Canouville, was not diminished when he discovered that the young aide-de-camp was an especial favourite of one of the Imperial Princesses. This afforded a fair ground of displeasure, and the anger of the lion was not easily soothed.

It happened that the Emperor Alexander sent to Napoleon a present of some splendid sable skins; those costly skins which the Samoiedes offer as their tribute to the Czar. Their value is immense, and their beauty exquisite. The Emperor sent some of these furs to all the princesses of the Imperial family, and knowing the taste for the luxuries of dress, which distinguished the friend of M. de Canouville, he selected for her the finest skins in the whole collection. M. de Canouville had just ordered

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a splendid hussar uniform, and the princess thought the sable would do admirably to trim the pelisse. It was accordingly cut into stripes, and sent to the tailor. The uniform was completed, and sent home in readiness for a grand review in the court of the Tuileries. The young officer put it on, and mounted on a fine English horse, attended the review. There happened to be something, either in the equipment of himself or his horse which was not conformable with the prescribed regulations. M. de Canouville caught the scrutinizing glance of the Emperor, who scanned him from head to foot, and immediately recognized the sable skin. "Who is that officer?" he angrily enquired of those near him.

When the review was ended, he said to Berthier:

"Why do you keep all these butterfly aides-de-camp fluttering about you. Why are they idling here when the cannon is roaring abroad? Let M. de Canouville be sent off this evening to Spain. There are, I think, some dispatches for the Prince of Essling. Let him be the bearer of them."

Berthier bowed, and bit his nails. He was in a painful state of perplexity, for the princess had several times earnestly petitioned that M. de Canouville might not be sent abroad. Nevertheless, Berthier could not venture to say a word in behalf of his aide-de-camp; and M. de Canouville immediately received his instructions. There was no alternative, and the handsome young aide-de-camp was obliged to quit Paris that very evening, which was Shrove-Tuesday, 1811. M. de Canouville in

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despair flew to the Prince of Neufchatel. "I can do nothing for you," said Berthier, "the Emperor's orders must be obeyed. What tempted you to make yourself so conspicuous at the review? Set off! set off! and I would advise you to depart before midnight, rather than after."

Poor Jules, finding that there was no hope of any respite, hastened to take leave of the princess, whom he found in a flood of tears. Duroc, who had just left her, had been the bearer of a terrible note from the Emperor. After a short scene of mutual regret and consolation, Jules departed with the promise that he would use all possible speed, and endeavour to be back in a fortnight.

Having taken his supper, and related to me his sad story, M. de Canouville took his leave of me, accompanied by Generals Thiebault and Fournier.

Next morning, as early as eight o'clock, he again called to ask me to give him a letter to Junot; such was his haste to complete his mission and get back to France.

Two days afterwards he was again in my saloon, enquiring what commissions I had for Paris. "Are you going back," said I; "but you have not seen the Prince of Essling."—"That is not my fault," replied he, "he cannot be found."—"But you have not been to seek him."—"How can I. No one is permitted to pass."—"But these excuses will not be satisfactory to the Emperor. I think you will do very wrong to return."

I advised him to go back immediately to the

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head-quarters of Count d'Erlon and there wait till the line of communication should be opened. "I return!" he exclaimed, "to wait until that old fool may be pleased to let us hear of him! No, no, I would rather shoot myself." He set off for Paris. But before the lapse of a few weeks he returned to the head-quarters of the Duke d'Istrie at Valladolid.

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CHAPTER VIII.

Marshal Jourdan—Soult—His successes on the banks of the Guadiana—Soult, and the sovereignty of Portugal—Ney's refractory spirit—The order to obey—Letter from Soult to Ney—Battle of Talaveyra—Campaign of Wagram—Ney's visit to France—His cool reception from the Emperor—He is sent back to Spain—Consequences of Soult's appointment as Commander-in-Chief of the three army corps—Olivenza—Colonel Chassé—Siege of Badajoz—Battle of Gebora.

MARSHAL JOURDAN was King Joseph's commander-in-chief, and had had the command of his army at the battle of Talaveyra. Shortly after that battle, Soult was appointed commander-in-chief, and Jourdan was recalled.

I had been but a few days at Salamanca when I heard of Marshal Soult's victories on the banks of the Guadiana, which were very important. But to enable the reader to form an adequate judgment of them, it will be necessary for me to retrace the course of affairs, to that period, when the unfortunate Massena was enclosed on the one hand by the formidable lines of Torres-Vedras, and on the other

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by sixty leagues of a ravaged and desolate country peopled only by assassins.

Soult had well nigh taken Wellington and all his forces, Spanish as well as English. The precipitate movements of Marshal Jourdan thwarted Soult's plans, and saved the English army. The English accounts, which bestow such high commendation on the foresight and judgment displayed by Wellington's movements, make no mention of the snare in which he was completely entrapped, when, while advancing on Madrid in perfect security, he had his rear cut off by Marshal Soult, who arrived by the Col-de-Banos. Wellington says indeed, "that he was very well aware there were a few *thousand* men in the Col-de-Banos." It is certain, and the English cannot deny it, that but for the precipitancy of Marshal Jourdan, Soult would have come up, and caught the English and Spaniards in the same trap,—for they were between him and the Duke of Belluno. The battle of Arzobispo, was the only result of the able plans of the Duke of Dalmatia, and even its advantages were annulled by errors previously committed.

At that time Marshal Jourdan was commander-in-chief of the army of Spain. The Duke of Dalmatia commanded the 2nd, 5th, and 6th corps, having under him Marshals Ney and Mortier.

It is well known that Marshal Ney did not like those commanders who came to exercise authority over him. He had evinced his dis-

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like in a most marked way towards the Duke of Dalmatia and the Prince d'Essling. The latter superseded the former.

At the time of the famous retreat from Oporto, when reports were circulated that Soult intended to assume the sovereignty of Portugal, Ney seized upon the public rumours and made them a ground of accusation against Soult. He not only wrote to Germany, where the Emperor then was; but he sent General Jermini, the chief of his staff, to state that Marshal Soult had returned to Spain more like a leader of partizans than the commander of a corps:—that after having pillaged and ravaged the country, and drawn the enemy upon his tract, he had evaded him and advanced upon Orense and Puebla de Sonobria, in the province of Salamanca, without warning him (Ney) of this movement, and thus leaving him exposed to La Romana, the English and the Portuguese, who might all attack and destroy him.

At the same time, without any concurrence, but merely by a curious accidental coincidence, the Duke de Treviso, alarmed by the reports which were circulated, dispatched an officer of his staff to acquaint the Emperor with what was going on.

Marshal Ney, after having dispatched his messenger to the Emperor, evacuated Gallicia to fall back on Benevento. Several officers who were then attached to his staff, have assured me that he confidently expected that Soult would be recalled and disgraced. The Emperor's reply to

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Ney, consisted of only one short sentence. It was an order to obey the Marshal Duke of Dalmatia. The same answer was transmitted to the Duke of Treviso. Soult had been appointed commander-in-chief of the three army corps.

Napoleon was not the man to allow the world to believe that his most able lieutenant could harbour the design of betraying him.

It would be impossible to describe Ney's rage on receiving the above answer.—He exclaimed that the Emperor was mad, and that it was necessary to put him under restraint. He left his army corps, and set off to Madrid, to obtain, as he said, justice from King Joseph. He was hastily proceeding on his journey, when, on his arrival at Valladolid he received the following note, with which Marshal Soult had dispatched a messenger in pursuit of him.

"How happens it, cousin, that you have gone and left us. I presume you are not aware that I have summoned your army corps on the Tagus—and that before a week is over, we shall have to give battle to the English who are marching in great force to Madrid."

At the idea of a battle being fought without him, Ney grew as furious as a lion. Madrid—King Joseph—the justice he was going to demand—all were forgotten. "*I obey*," said he, and two days after he was at the head of his corps.

Shortly after this little affair, came the battle of Talaveyra, where both the English and ourselves suffered such severe loss. Then came the battle

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of Arzobispo, which I have already mentioned. After this last battle, the Duke of Wellington was in full retreat on Portugal, where he went like a mouse into a trap. There Marshal Ney's uncomplying spirit again manifested itself, and in consequence of his refusal to pass the ford at San Toril, below Alcantara, he did not take all the stragglers who might have fallen into his hands. After the above battles, the three corps resumed their cantonments.

All this time the Emperor was in Germany, fighting the battles of the campaign of Wagram; but his eagle glance nevertheless extended to the plains of Estremadura and Castille. He could descry great faults through the brilliant veil that had been drawn over them. Napoleon was dissatisfied, and publicly expressed his displeasure. He recalled Jourdan, and appointed the Duke of Dalmatia to succeed him as major-general of the army of Spain. The Duke of Dalmatia was at that time in the heart of Estremadura, in a wretched village called Oropesa, which he had made the central point of his cantonments.

After the battle of Arzobispo, Marshal Ney went to Madrid, and he happened to be dining with King Joseph, when his Majesty received from the Emperor intelligence of the nomination of Soult in the place of Jourdan. News of this kind was calculated to irritate Marshal Ney; on this occasion he allowed his temper to master him so completely, that on rising from table, he set off for Paris, without asking leave, or giving any

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sort of notice of his intention. The Emperor received him with marked displeasure, he had double cause for dissatisfaction, for General Marchand, to whom had been consigned the command of Ney's army corps, had been beaten at Tamames. The Emperor ordered Marshal Ney to depart within twenty-four hours, and would not hear any thing he had to say.

Marshal Ney accordingly returned to Spain, though on leaving Madrid he had said to one of the officers of his staff:

"I leave this odious country never to return. The Emperor must give me another destination, or....but I will not return here....It is the court of King Petard."

After this affair, Ney had the command of the 6th corps, and was placed under Massena.

I have mentioned that Marshal Soult was appointed commander-in-chief of the army. The results of this appointment were as follows:— A greater degree of activity was observable in all the military movements, and plans were laid for passing the succeeding winter in Lisbon and Cadiz. The battle of Ocana, gained by Marshal Mortier, commenced the series of victories which continued to crown our arms. Towards the close of the autumn we were in possession of the whole of Andalusia. General Dessoles was in Cordova, with a fine division. General Sebastiani was in Grenada, playing the Abencerage at his ease, while at the same time, he did not forget his duty as general, and kept a watchful eye on Murcia.

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Meanwhile the Duke de Belluno was besieging Cadiz, being in person at Puerto de Santa Maria, and observing Tariffa and Gibraltar; Marshal Mortier, after his victory of Ocana immediately advanced into Estremadura and was threatening Badajoz.

Soult passed upwards of a year in Andalusia. During that time, Massena was taking towns and chacing Lord Wellington before him. He had advanced into Portugal, and arrived before the lines of Torres Vedras. There he halted, for the general whom he was pursuing, and who seemed to have led him on to the chace, suddenly turned round upon him, and with an air of mockery, said: "Thou shalt advance no further."

And before what redoubt was this mockery addressed to us? Before the neck of an isthmus, at the extremity of which Lisbon is situated. Its diameter from the Jezandra to the sea is six or seven French leagues. Along this line, the English had established one hundred and eight redoubts, which were furnished with four hundred pieces of cannon. Finally, to provide a counter protection to these same redoubts, a plan had been contrived for surrounding them with inundation by bringing water from the mountains; in short, thev were fortified by all the power of nature and art.

While Massena was advancing into Portugal the Duke de Dalmatia received an imperial dispatch in which were the following lines: "I wish you to *favour* the Prince of Essling. Be the same

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as you were at Austerlitz. And in seconding Massena, recollect that it is your old companion in glory at the siege of Genoa, whom you are helping to enter Lisbon."

Napoleon observed the peculiar characters of different men, and managed them accordingly. Eight days after the receipt of the above letter, Soult assembled all the troops he could collect, and left *Sevilla la Hermosa*, leaving General Aricand to guard it with two battalions of infantry. With a force of between eight and nine thousand men, Soult marched straight upon Badajoz to surround and take it, and deliver Massena, who, as I have stated was stopped before the lines of Torres Vedras. It was necessary that Soult should make a powerful diversion. La Romana had just died suddenly. He was without doubt the most able Spanish commander of that time. He was succeeded in Estremadura by Ballisteros and Mendizabal. Ballisteros marched into the plains of the Guadiana, in the direction of Salvatierra, and Mendizabal left a strong garrison at Olivenza, and crossed to the opposite side of the river. Olivenza was a point of great importance in the military operations of Portugal. It was invested on the 11th of January and surrendered on the 22nd. It contained a considerable supply of ammunition, and the garrison consisted of upwards of four thousand men.

Immediately after the surrender of Olivenza, Soult marched on Badajoz, and the siege was

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vigorously carried on. I may mention that the 1st regiment of infantry, which commenced the works of the trench, opposite Olivenza, was commanded by Colonel Chassé, who held out so firmly as commandant of the citadel at the late siege of Antwerp.

When the garrison of Olivenza defiled on the glacis, and laid down arms before Marshal Soult, the troops appeared to be mortified by the conviction that their force was equal to that of their besiegers. Several officers prompted by feelings which could scarcely be blamed, intimated their determination to defend themselves though conquered. Marshal Soult advanced to their general and said:

"If one of your men should dare to utter another syllable of imprecation, I will have you all shot on the instant." There is little doubt that he would have put his threat in execution. The ceremony of laying down arms was continued without further murmuring.

Hospitals were established. Soult left behind him his invalids, and all that might impede him in his march, and continued his advance on Badajoz, to release Massena, by going to join him by the way of Estremadura and the Alentejo.

We have now arrived at the point at which I broke off at the commencement of the present chapter. The destinies of Europe, at that time depended on the course of events in the Peninsula, and it was Napoleon's misfortune that he was not convinced of this fact.

Tortosa had fallen into the victorious hands of

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Marshal Suchet. The garrison which was numerous, marched to France. The ammunition though considerable was abandoned. A few days afterwards we heard of the taking of Olivenza by Marshal Soult, and that important event was followed by a victory gained by the French on the banks of the Gebora, a small tributary river of the Guadiana near Badajoz.

To terminate the above brief sketch of a campaign which had so great an influence on the interests of France, I may add that the brave commandant of Badajoz, General Menatcho, who had his head shot off four days previously to the battle of Gebora, was succeeded by General Imaz. On the 11th of March the breach was practicable and he capitulated. The English, who were very fond of attributing the misfortunes of the Peninsula war to the Spaniards themselves, alleged that Imaz capitulated at the very time he learned that Massena was in full retreat, and that he was informed of that event by a telegraphic dispatch. I know nothing of this ; but a fact which I do know, is that General Imaz had a garrison of nine thousand men, who laid down their arms on the glacis of the citadel. Next day, Marshal Mortier marched on Campo-Mayor which was immediately taken. The siege of Badajoz lasted fifty four days.

I was in Salamanca when I heard of the taking of Badajoz. I was overjoyed, for I concluded that Marshal Soult would at length advance. He indeed was preparing to do so, when, just as he

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was mounting his horse, he received intelligence that Massena had commenced his retreat on the north of Portugal. At the same time he learned that the Duke de Belluno had allowed himself to be decoyed like a child before Cadiz, and that the English had effected a landing to the south of Chiclana on the coast of Andalusia.

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CHAPTER IX.

My abode in a convent—Description of my apartment—The Spanish nun and Marshal Duroc—The nun's sister and the Emperor—Massena—The hero of Genoa and Rivoli—Retreat into Spain—Scarcity of provisions—The conference of Gollegão—Marshal Ney saves the army—Arrival at Celerico—Ney's return to France—Junot's arrival at Salamanca—Our departure for Toro—Desertion of Lieutenant-Colonel Fitz-Henry—Destruction of the fortifications of Almeida—General Brenier—Massena's letter to me—Projected marriage between his son and my daughter—Description of Toro—The convents—Junot recalled to France—Marmont's visit to us—General Caffarelli at Vittoria—The people of Biscay—Their peculiar laws and constitution—The attack on the convoy—The massacre of Salinas—Crossing the bridge of the Bidassoa.

I WILL here relate a little anecdote which served to amuse me a long time after my return from Spain.

When we were moving about from place to place, if I happened not to be satisfied with the abode assigned to me, I used to apply to the alcade or the corregidor of the town for permission to remove to a convent of nuns; well assured that I should there find not only comforts, but even luxuries. At Duenas, Torrequemada, or Brebiesca, which of the three places I cannot now

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precisely recollect, but it was in one of the stations between Bayonne and Madrid, Junot remained in the house which had been assigned to our use, and I took up my abode in a convent. I was received with the kindest hospitality by the abbess. The floor of my apartment was covered with beautiful India matting, and the lower part of the walls were hung with Spanish leather. There were several good arm chairs, and in the middle of the room a brasero for burning olive nuts. The water ewer was of silver and the towels of fine damask. The bed was hung with curtains of India pekin, and there were in the room several mirrors in silver filligree frames. In short, the apartment contained numberless little elegancies, and I found it quite a delightful retreat.

The Spanish nuns of the present day afford no idea of what monastic life formerly was. They lead a life of liberty, sometimes even of licence. In fact they enjoy, in too great an extent, the privilege of receiving strangers. With them the *closura* really exists only in name. The visit of a stranger never fails to excite their curiosity in an inordinate degree. As soon as I was installed in my habitation above described, the nuns came two by two and three by three to talk to me, and, as they expressed it, to keep me in good spirits. At first they amused me, but after a time I found their visits tiresome. One of them, who was exceedingly pretty, was less intrusive than her companions, though she appeared very desirous to talk with me. I asked her to come and pay me

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a visit in my apartment; but when she came I discovered that our conversation was likely to be brief. The pretty sister did not speak a word of French, and I knew only enough of Spanish to be able to give utterance to a few sentences. At first she was very reserved; but one evening when she came to see me, she seemed to pluck up courage, and she pronounced a name which almost made me leap from my chair with astonishment; I could not guess by what chance that name happened to be known in the interior of a convent. I looked at the little nun, who was called Santa-Maria da Gracia, a name which she truly deserved, for she was a beautiful and graceful girl. When I fixed my eyes on her, she was as red as a rose, and the blush was the more becoming to her, inasmuch as she, like all the Spanish women, was naturally pale. But still the blush, pretty as it made her look, did not explain her question. I thought I might have misunderstood her, and I asked her what she said. She repeated it; and this time distinctly said:

"*Donde esta ahora el General Duroc?*" (Where is General Duroc?)

"Why do you ask, sister?" I exclaimed, not a little surprised and amused at the question.

The nun put her finger on her lip, smiled, and shewed me thirty-two beautiful pearls. Then she said in a whisper, and with a charming expression of confidence which shewed that she saw I had understood her:

"*Esta bien?*" (Is he well?)

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"*Oh! muy bien....muy bien.*" (Oh very well ....very well,) replied I. And taking her hand I added:

"*Es my amigo el General Duroc.*" (General Duroc is a friend of mine.)

The nun's pretty face was immediately lighted up with a charming expression of joy. Her eyes became more brilliant, and a bright smile played on her lips. She clasped her hands, and half raising them, came and stood before me as if to get a better view of me. I was another being to her as soon as she learned that I was the friend of the man she loved. And yet for aught she knew I might have been her rival; I might have been Duroc's wife. But in the first moment of her joy, no such thought occurred to the warm-hearted Spaniard.

I learned no more from the little nun, but one of her companions afterwards informed me that she had made her profession only two months previously. She belonged to a good family in one of the provinces, and from her infancy had been destined for the cloister.

On the following day, when I again saw the nun, I asked whether she was aware that General Duroc was married. She nodded her head affirmatively, and without any appearance of chagrin.

"*Su muger es Espanola.*"* (His wife is a Spanish lady,) added I.

* Madame Duroc, now the Baroness Fabrier, is a daughter of M. Hervas.

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At this information she appeared very much surprised. She several times raised her hands in token of astonishment, but still without any sign of vexation. When I left the convent, she gave me a little relic which I very carefully conveyed to France, and delivered to the person for whom it was intended.

When I mentioned this little adventure to Duroc, it was a long time before he could understand it; and no wonder, for my Santa Maria da Gracia, in her monastic habit, did not bring to his recollection a pretty little Spanish girl dressed in a fringed basquina, and a pink bodice embroidered with silver. However, by my description and the mention of her native place, he soon discovered her identity. I was much amused at the embarrassment which this little affair caused him. I promised him that I would be discreet, and I kept my promise.

"It is not for my own sake that I am afraid." said he.

"For whom then?" enquired I.

"I will not tell you," said he.

"Well then, if you will not honestly tell me all, I promise you that I will torment you about the little nun, whenever we meet."

"For Heaven's sake, do not," he exclaimed, "I will never forgive you."

"Then tell me what I wish to know."

"I cannot; for it does not concern myself alone."

"Well, but since I have your secret, and have promised to keep it, surely I may be trusted with

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the secret of another. To a woman, two secrets are no heavier than one. When once the effort of discretion is accomplished, one may carry it to any length."

He laughed and bade me farewel. But I executed my threat. Whenever we met, I whispered a word and made a sign which reminded him of Maria da Gracia. He was almost mad. At length he said to me one day: "Madame Junot, how unmerciful you are! What have I done to deserve this persecution at your hands?....But, tell me, did not Maria da Gracia's sister make any enquiry about the Emperor?"

"Ah! at length I understand you," said I.

I suspect that the year 1811 was very fertile in events of this kind. There was at Salamanca a certain convent of Augustine nuns, from whose *mirador** were given and received many signals of intelligence. There was also another at Vallodolid near Campo-Grande.

We had now arrived at a remarkable epoch in the annals of France. Her glory was beginning to lose somewhat of its lustre; and her arms were no longer triumphant as in those days when whole nations were wont to fall before them.

Massena, he who was now retreating before the English, was the same man who had conquered at Essling, at Rivoli, and at Genoa. But, to speak more properly, he was no longer the same.

* The mirador is a gallery built at the top of the nunnery, in which the nuns go to take the air in the evening. They are there screened from observation, except when they wish to be seen.

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On the 14th of November the French army commenced its retreat under the protection of Ney and Junot. My husband informed me that Ney's conduct was sublime during the whole of that retreat; though it could not correctly be termed a retreat, until the moment when Massena determined to re-enter Spain, which he did on the arrival of the 9th corps. There was an utter scarcity of provisions, and the troops had no subsistence but what they procured by plunder. The arrival of the 9th corps was therefore a misfortune. On the 27th November, the division commanded by Couroux joined the army of Portugal, and on the 29th, Count d'Erlon himself arrived at Torres-Novas. For a short time, the army took a position; but the scarcity of provisions became so severe, that the Prince of Essling at length proposed a retreat. He convoked a sort of council, if I may so call the conference, which was held at Gollegao, Massena's head-quarters, and after considerable discussion the retreat was determined on.

The army began to move on the 6th of March. On the same day the Duke d'Abrantes left Pernes, and blew up the bridge before his departure. The 8th corps had scarcely begun to move when the English army appeared on its left, and continued to follow it in its march.

This was a glorious moment for Marshal Ney. He saved the army! Yet the Prince of Essling had not behaved well to him. Junot sent me a letter in the month of January, in which he said: "There appears a determination to lay all the

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mischief that has been done in this campaign to the account of Ney and me. But I will not submit to be thus attacked without defending myself. The Emperor shall hear me. He shall at least know the truth."

Ney was sensible to Massena's ill-treatment of him; but in the moment of danger he rejected all thought of revenge. He was wholly intent on saving the army, and his conduct was admirable. He formed the rear-guard, and constantly sustained the fire of the enemy. His courage and firmness seemed almost to awe the English, and he saved the army of Portugal from utter destruction.

At length the army reached Celerico, where it was out of danger. Then Marshal Ney, finding that his brothers in arms no longer needed his aid, left them and set off for France.

I saw him on his way. He was very much irritated against Massena, and he had reason to be so. Yet after all it was easy to perceive that Ney allowed his temper to master him, and he seemed to view his grievances in one of those mirrors in which objects are doubled and augmented.

Junot returned to Salamanca, and we almost immediately departed for Toro. The army of Portugal was in a complete state of dissolution. The cavalry was destroyed; the artillery almost all dismounted, and the infantry in the most deplorable condition.

On passing through Martin del Rio, Junot heard

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a piece of news which was of evil augury. It was the desertion of Fitz-Henry, Lieutenant Colonel of the Irish regiment. He had not only deserted, but had taken with him eighty-four men of his regiment, who together with himself joined Don Julian in the neighbourhood of the Boredo de Castro. This news made a profound impression on Junot. At the same time the Duke of Wellington, who still followed our tracks, had arrived before Almeida. That unfortunate town, which had been the prey of two sieges and two explosions, was destined speedily to be visited by another catastrophe.

General Brenier was now the commandant of Almeida. He was a brave and resolute man. In stature he was scarcely taller than a boy of twelve years of age; but with this diminutive appearance he combined all the noble qualities of an officer of the grand army, who had fought the battles of the republic. Consequently we were certain that Almeida would hold out to the very last moment; but it seemed to be fated to perish in the air. On the night of the 10th of May, a dreadful explosion was heard. It was Almeida again. This time the fortifications were blown up; all were destroyed. But favoured by the darkness of night, the garrison escaped, and gained Barba del Puerco, where it was received by the 2nd corps. General Brenier lost four hundred and fifty men in this affair; but the honour of the garrison was saved.

In the morning, Junot came to me with a letter

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in his hand which he desired me to read. It was from Massena, announcing that he was about to leave the army, and requesting Junot to go and see him before his departure for France. The letter which was addressed to Junot enclosed one for me; the cause of this special mark of attention was as follows.

A marriage had been proposed between Massena's son and one of my daughters. The prince therefore thought that a little farewel billet was almost an indispensable mark of attention, and he requested permission to go and see my children on his arrival in Paris. "One of them," said he, "is as much mine as yours. Give me then a letter to her from you, or her father."

My children were then in Burgundy. I very much regretted this circumstance, for it prevented me giving Massena the letter he wished for. I know very well that he fancied I withheld it merely from a feeling of ill-humour, excited by his misunderstandings with the duke. In addition to this, Junot had an enemy who took pleasure in fanning the flame of discord—a fact which will help to explain several incidents which I shall presently have occasion to mention. I replied to Massena by a letter, which I wrote in the civilest way I could, and which Junot himself conveyed to him.

I was now left at Toro, in the company of my consoling angel, Madame Thomières, and guarded by the 1st division, of which General Clausel was at the head. Toro is a very old town, situated in kingdom of Leon, on the right bank of the Duero.

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It is the Abocella of the Romans. The town is pretty, and tolerably populous for Spain; and but for the convents which give it a gloomy aspect, it would be a very agreeable place of abode.* The surrounding country is fertile and beautiful, and is watered by a fine river.

When Junot returned from his visit to Massena at Salamanca, he informed me that their old friendship had been riveted as firmly as ever. The projected marriage of their two children had formed a new link of union between them. It is thus that the young generation rules the old.

Massena returned to France and left the command of the army of Portugal on the 15th of May, 1811. He was succeeded by Marshal Marmont. A letter from the Emperor, written by his own hand, informed Junot that he was to be appointed to another command in the north, and that he was in consequence to leave Spain and return to France.

When he said to me, "Laura, we are to return home." I leaped from my chair, and embraced him with tears of joy. All my troubles were forgotten, and indeed I would willingly have encountered them over again for the happiness I felt at that moment.

* Toro contains nearly eight thousand inhabitants; but as a great proportion of them are shut up in the convents, the town appears almost deserted. It is the same in Valladolid and Salamanca: Valladolid especially suffers severely from this scourge. In 1805 it contained forty-seven convents, and its population amounted to only 30,000 souls.

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It will readily be supposed that our preparations were speedily completed. Marshal Marmont, who had just arrived at Salamanca, came to bid farewel to his old friend and brother in arms. He dined with us at Toro; when he entered the drawing-room with its uncarpeted floor, and its walls of oak, blackened by age, and saw the little gloomy apartment which served as my bed chamber, he said in a tone of concern: "Is this your abode?"

"Yes," said I laughing; "and it is a perfect palace compared with what we had at Ciudad-Rodrigo, at Santa Felices el Grande, and even at Ledesma."

"And yet you laugh and are merry!"

"I have not always had reason to be so; but we are now going back to France." Our house appeared to him almost a prison; and yet I spoke truth, it was a palace compared with the places in which I had lived since my departure from Salamanca in the preceding year.

At length we set off. Junot himself commanded our escort, which was chiefly composed of the squares of his army corps. Our party was augmented by several persons who, anxious to travel in safety, asked, and obtained leave to accompany us. We thus formed a little army. The road from Burgos to Bayonne was exceedingly dangerous. We took with us Madame Thomières, though she entreated her husband to allow her to remain in Spain. This the general would not consent to. He foresaw another campaign in Por-

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tugal, more terrible perhaps, than the two first, and he would not expose his wife to the horrors of a precipitate retreat, like that of Oporto, or a retreat attended by famine and assassination, like that which had just been made. He consigned his wife to our care, and we took her with us. She wept bitterly on leaving Spain. "I never shall see my husband more," said she; "I feel convinced that I never shall." Alas! poor lady, her presentiment was but too just. General Thomières was killed at the Arapiles.*

The first part of our journey was very agreeable. We stopped at Valladolid to pay a promised visit to Marshal Bessières, and we passed two days with him. He lived in elegant style, at the palace in the square of St. Paul where, in fact, he held a sort of court.

From Valladolid we journied on tranquilly as far as Burgos; but when we arrived at Bribiesca we heard the most alarming reports. Some said that the bridge of the Bidassoa had been burnt by Mina;—others, that the town of Vittoria was sacked;—that General Caffarelli had been massacred, and that the insurgents were masters of the whole country.

Junot endeavoured to banish our terrors; but it was evident that he himself was uneasy. He had certain intelligence, for he paid his spies liberally, and though in Spain, perhaps, there is less facility for treason than elsewhere, yet there, as in every

* The battle of Salamanca, fought on the 20th of July 1812.

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other country, a golden key will open every door and untie every tongue. Junot had been informed of the horrible massacre of Salinas; his inquietude may therefore be conceived.

When we arrived at Vittoria, Junot, to his sincere gratification, found General Caffarelli, his old friend and comrade in the campaigns of Egypt and Italy. The Caffarellis bear a name dear to all who have known them. The one who died in Egypt was much beloved by the Emperor; the one, whom we now found in Vittoria, was one of his favorite aides-de-camp. He was governor of the three provinces called the Vascondages, consisting of Alava, Biscay and Guipuscoa; he was heartily tired of that sanguinary war, which produced no laurel amidst its disasters on a soil bathed with blood.

A few days before our arrival at Vittoria he had despatched to France a convoy of invalids, prisoners and travellers. To enable the reader to form an idea of the horrible event that ensued, I must endeavour to give some description of the locality. The plain of Vittoria is immense; it is only at its extremity that are discerned the pointed rocks, the last of which the traveller flatters himself he has left behind him at Pancorvo. At Salinas de Lecy, these wild rocks afford every facility for an ambuscade, and for surrounding those who are passing along the road. This road is at first tolerably wide; and after a gentle rise, it takes a sudden and rapid descent to Salmas, a paltry little town, containing a few wretched houses and

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a *fonda**. It derives its name from some salt mines in its vicinity; but the most abundant production of the country is iron. At Mondragon, Bergara and all the little towns on the banks of the Eva, the mines are worked with great activity, and the iron they produce is excellent; there is likewise in that part of Spain a mine of natural steel. The inhabitants of Biscay are intelligent, and there is nothing the country produces which is not made available for the purposes of industry.

Biscay, though in Spain, is in some degree out of the moral limits of that country. The Biscayans carry their love of independence as far as any people can, and to the attainment of it they have on several occasions sacrificed their interests and sometimes their lives. The court of Spain, even in old times, respected the peculiar privileges of the Biscayans, and entertained for them a sort of deference, if not fear. Thus, for example, the imposts levied on Biscay bore the name and character of gratuitous gifts. When troops were wanted, the contingent of the provinces of Biscay was furnished only on application being made to their government. Previously to the war, Alava, Guipuscoa and Biscay were not subject to any custom-house duties. In 1778, when Florida Blanca wished to extend the trade of the mother country to several ports of Spanish America, it was proposed that Biscay should participate in the advantages of this commercial union, by voluntarily submitting to

* The difference between a *fonda* and a *venta* or a *posada* is that a *fonda* is established by royal privilege.

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custom-house duties. The Biscayans refused. In 1804 a new territorial impost was levied on Alava. An insurrection had well nigh been the consequence; it was repressed by the exile of several influential landed proprietors, who shewed themselves resolved to maintain the rights of their constitution.

The above facts will enable the reader to form an idea of the effect produced on the people of Biscay by the Emperor's invasion of Spain, which at once threatened their fortunes and their liberties. Several leaders of bands who were well acquainted with the country, and knew all the lurking places which it afforded, committed the most lawless acts of violence against the French. They not only assassinated solitary individuals and carried off couriers, but they soon became so daring as to attack whole convoys; and Mina, then the terror of Spain, rose and headed the most furious party of the insurgents.

The convoy above alluded to, which had been dispatched from Vittoria to France, took the direction of Salinas; and the inhabitants of Vittoria who watched its departure, saw it gradually disappear in the defiles of the mountains. The Spaniards allowed their victims to get completely engaged in the defiles. The road which is narrow, is edged on one side by the Eva, and on the other by pointed rocks, which cannot be ascended, though they may be descended with comparative facility. Mina had his men concealed in the thickets behind the rocks which overhang

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the road. Then, when the last Frenchman had entered the snare, they burst from their ambuscade, and the massacre commenced.

The horrors which were committed were not at the time accurately known; because the Emperor did not wish to excite alarm in persons who had to return to Spain. Women, invalids and children, all were massacred without mercy, and with a refinement of cruelty which would scarcely have been practised among cannibals. The only Frenchman spared was Colonel Lafitte, who had eleven wounds. The commander of the convoy had under his care a strong detachment of Spanish prisoners; these were liberated, to swell the number of our enemies.

General Caffarelli described this horrible affair to us in all its details!....He wished us to remain longer at Vittoria. But Junot thought, and very judiciously, that immediately after such an event the road was likely to be safest. Mina had retired into the upper valleys; so at least we were informed by our spies.

After the combat only a portion of the bodies had been interred. When we passed, many were yet strewed along the banks of the river. It was the most horrible sight imaginable, to see fragments of human bodies hanging to the branches of the trees, which grew here and there on the mountains; for our soldiers had had time to fire at, and kill some of their assailants, as they descended them.

We passed though Biscay without any hostile

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encounter, though the most alarming reports were communicated to us in every place in which we stopped. At Hernani we were so positively informed that the bridge of the Bidassoa was burnt, that Junot sent forward to ascertain the fact. It was true that the bridge had been attacked by Espoz y Mina; but the French had forced him to retreat. However the Spaniards had had time to throw combustible matter on the bridge, which being of wood had caught fire. It was fortuuately extinguished, and two days after we crossed it and bad adieu to Spain.

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CHAPTER X.

Birth of the King of Rome—Departure of Madame Thomières for Mons—Our unexpected meeting with King Joseph—My arrival in Paris—Change observable at court—The Faubourg St. Germain—My presentation to the Empress—Court mourning—My court dress—Maria Louisa—Her personal appearance—Her agreeable reception of me—Madame de Sévigné and Louis XIV—Court parties—Conversation on Spain—The Duchess de Montebello—The Court at Trianon—Madame Ney's proposition—The Duchess de Ragusa's amendment—Our dinner at M. de Ricbourg's—Ney's court dress—The Gardens at Trianon—Maria Louisa and Josephine.

The birth of the King of Rome was the last smile that beamed over the fortunes of Napoleon. How happy it rendered him! How he blessed himself in it! They alone can judge of the full extent of his joy, who beheld him fondly caressing the lovely boy, and promising by his looks all the felicity which such a man could confer on his race. Only those who witnessed this can form any idea of the sufferings which Napoleon must have endured on his rock of exile, where the portrait of the angelic child he was never more to behold, was all that was left him.

At Bayonne I parted with great regret from

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Madame Thomières who took the road to Mons, while I proceeded to Paris.

How agreeably was I surprized when on my arrival at a post near Poitiers, I perceived at the hotel door a crowd of people and a great number of carriages. The people opened a passage for a gentleman whose features I could not at the moment distinguish, but who immediately advanced towards our carriage. My husband was the first to recognize him.—It was King Joseph. Junot alighted, and I was about to do the same, but Joseph would not permit me. He got into the carriage himself, and sat down opposite to me. How delighted was I at this unexpected meeting, with my mother's and my brother's friend, the man whom we had ever found as kind, and amiable in the Rue du Rocher, as he had been in the parental home at Ajaccio ;—and on the throne of Spain and the Indies as mindful of his friends, as when he lived in the Rue du Rocher. His goodness, his benevolence, and his sincerity of heart, preserved to him in the moment of unmerited adversity, as many friends as he possessed when his brows were encircled by a crown.

He was on his return from Paris where he had been attending the baptism of the King of Rome, to whom he and Madame-Mère stood sponsors. He confessed to us that he had never beheld a more beautiful child than his royal nephew.

Joseph appeared melancholy. Junot asked him several questions respecting Paris, and the new Empress ; and I could perceive when he enquired

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about the Emperor, that Joseph's countenance assumed a sorrowful expression.

" I understand that his Majesty is in excellent health," observed I, willing to divert away an idea, which appeared unpleasant to the king.

" Yes," replied Joseph, " he is very well; better than ever; and yet Madame Junot you will find him much altered."

He said this with a melancholy smile, and it was easy to understand the short of change he meant. After staying a few moments in the carriage, he took his leave of me more like a brother than a king, and alighted. Junot accompanied him to the hotel, and on afterwards rejoining me, he said, that the King of Spain had been struck with the change which had taken place in the Emperor since his second marriage.

" You will no longer find him the Napoleon of the army of Italy," said he to Junot; " he is no longer the same." How often have I recalled these words to my memory!

We resumed our journey, and at length entered Paris. I flew to embrace my children, I found them all in perfect health.

Paris appeared to me to be extremely altered. The whole aspect of society was different from what it had been when I left it, so that I really began to think myself in a foreign city. I could not help remarking this to my friends, and asking the reason why the court I had left so gay, and so attractive, should on my return wear so different an aspect.

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I learned that many causes might be assigned for this phenomenon ; but the Emperor's marriage was certainly the chief one. The Faubourg St. Germain which had furnished several *dames du palais* to Josephine, had not, though protected by the Ex-Empress, ventured to take the formidable position it now assumed. But when Napoleon married an Austrian princess, the Faubourg St. Germain became arrogant, and the Emperor unfortunately tolerated its arrogance. The Faubourg played its game, and played it well ; but Napoleon played badly.

On the Emperor's marriage, the court had been presented as it were *en masse* to the Empress, but as I was not then in Paris, I had to undergo the unpleasant formality of a private presentation. Soon after my arrival, I went to the Duchess of Montebello requesting her to acquaint me with her Majesty's wishes on the subject.

I received an immediate answer, informing me that both myself and Junot should be presented on the following day. The court was then in deep mourning for the King of Denmark, and I consequently had to provide myself with a mourning court dress. I ordered a robe of black crape over a black satin petticoat. Both the robe and petticoat were trimmed with blond surmounted by a heading of jet. My head dress was a plume of black feathers, and I wore a beautiful Berlin necklace and ear-rings. This court dress, entirely black, had a very rich and beautiful effect. The time appointed for my presentation was two o'clock in the afternoon.

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Accompanied by Junot, I proceeded to the grand marshal's, where we had to wait with other individuals who were to be that day presented, until our turn arrived. Junot's turn came before mine.

When my name was called, I confess I advanced to the audience room at a pace more hurried than is usual on such occasions. I was all impatience to see the Empress who had supplanted Josephine; she who had been commissioned by God and man to complete the happiness of the sovereign we loved and revered. The truth is, my curiosity was excited to the highest pitch, and when I entered the great yellow saloon, that room in which Josephine always received us, my feelings were greatly excited.

Maria Louisa was then nineteen years of age. Her stature was of the middle height, and if her bust and shoulders had been a little smaller, she might have possessed a pleasing figure. Grace, however, she was entirely deficient in. Never indeed was woman more destitute of that qualification. The materials were there, but they were ill-adjusted. The composition, in short, wanted the essential quality of harmony. A Calmuck face, with an Austrian mouth, a form such as Reubens would have delighted to trace, with arms and hands ridiculously diminutive, bearing no proportion to the rest of her figure, a fresh complexion and a fine head of hair; such were the charms which had captivated Napoleon, who nevertheless had been well accustomed to the sight of

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female beauty. However, it is certain that he was fond, and exceedingly fond of Maria Louisa.

Though I advanced with quick steps towards the door, yet I had no sooner reached it than I suddenly slackened my pace. I recollected that Maria Louisa was a German princess, and that I must carefully observe all the etiquette I had learned at foreign courts. I therefore made my entry with all the gravity of a dowager. I made my three courtesies, and awaited in silence her Majesty's good pleasure.

This good pleasure was not always to open a conversation, especially in public. However it was impossible that she and I could pass all the time of the audience in merely staring at each other, and it was equally impossible that I should speak first.

After looking at me attentively with a kind and gracious expression, the Empress commenced the conversation by asking me how long I had been in Spain?—whether I had been to Madrid?—whether I had not found it very hot there?—and whether I was with Junot when he was wounded?

This last question completed the enchantment. I had already been gratified to find that she opened the conversation by a question which personally concerned me. I could now easily understand Madame de Sévigné's exclamation after she had danced with Louis XIV,

"*Quel grand roi nous avons!*"

"Well! what do you think of the Empress?"

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was the question put to me by at least thirty persons, whom I met the same day.

"Oh! I am delighted with her!" said I, "I even think her pretty. Why did you tell me she was not so?"

The person to whom I addressed this rebuke smiled, and remained silent. Shortly after, there was a party at court. I had been told on the evening of my presentation that the Empress had remarked, that of all the ladies she had seen in France I made the best courtesy. Whether or not the Empress really said this, I cannot tell; but it may readily be supposed that it completed the fascination. When therefore I went to the party above mentioned, I thought Maria Louisa quite charming with her fair hair and her white swan-like neck. She again conversed with me about Spain, and asked me whether I found it as hot there as in France. This was very gratifying to me, and it shewed tact on her part; for the conversation of a sovereign may be rendered doubly agreeable by the choice of the subject on which it turns. Another party was given—Spain was still the theme of the Empress's conversation with me. I now began to feel the repetition a little tiresome.

The Emperor the first time he saw me after my return exclaimed:—"Ah! ah! Madame Junot. Well! you have been in Spain? Were you very much afraid of the guerillas? They tell me that you were as brave as a soldier!" After this, he alluded to Spain only once or twice.

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On the day of my presentation, I was pleased to perceive behind the Empress the lady who was better than any other fitted to be her lady of honour, the Duchess of Montebello. I must confess that it gave me infinite pleasure to observe her smiling on me with the cordial expression of true friendship, and representing as it were in her person at Maria Louisa's court the whole of the imperial army.

On St. Louis's day the Empress held a grand court at Trianon. The Empress was very partial to Trianon, and the Emperor, always desirous to please her, ordered that the day of the fête should be celebrated there. Consequently, without regarding the inconvenience to which the ladies must be subjected in riding such a distance in full dress, the cards of invitation were issued for Trianon.

Madame Ney, the Duchess of Ragusa and myself were together when we heard of the intended fête, and the conversation immediately turned upon the difficulty of travelling four leagues and a half in our court dresses.

" Well !" said Madame Ney, " I propose that we go to Versailles in our morning dresses, and take our court dresses and our *femmes-de-chambre* with us. We can set out from Paris time enough to take a drive in the park, and as my husband and General Junot are here, they can escort us to Raimbaud's to dinner, and there we can dress, and afterwards go to Trianon without ruffling our dresses or fatiguing ourselves.

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This plan was too agreeable not to be approved of. The Duchess of Ragusa however proposed an amendment, which was also agreed to unanimously. She had an old friend named Ricbourg, who was formerly *maître d'hôtel* to the king, as well as I recollect, and who was now living at Versailles. He was the friend of the elder M. Perregaux, and had known Madame Marmont from her infancy. The Duchess proposed that we should dine at the house of this old gentleman, there dress and proceed at once to Trianon. On M. Ricbourg being informed of our intentions he was delighted, for he was acquainted with us all.

Marshal and Madame Ney, Junot and I, the Duchess of Ragusa, Lavallette, and the Baroness Lallemand all assembled in M. Ricbourg's dining-room on the 25th of August, 1811. We were all in high spirits, and sat down to an excellent dinner.

When we retired from table, Madame Ney told us that she had never been able to prevail on Ney to wear a full dress coat; but hoping that in our joyous party he might be a little less obstinate than usual, she had ordered the dress coat to be brought from Paris, together with the point ruffles and all the other accessories of a full court costume. However, the difficulty was, not to bring the coat from Paris to Versailles, but to prevail on the marshal to wear it from Versailles to Trianon.

"My dear," said Madame Ney, in her soft tone of voice, and stepping up to her husband

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timidly, as if she expected to be repulsed in the attack, "you know we have no time to lose. We ladies are almost ready. Does your dress coat require any thing to be done to it?"

"My dress coat!" exclaimed the marshal, with evident consternation.

"Yes, you know it is the Emperor's wish that you should all appear in French court dresses, and you must...."

"Nonsense," said Ney, "do not talk to me of that masquerade foolery. I will never put it on to get laughed at, as I laugh at others who wear it."

"But my dear Ney, it is impossible to go without it....The Emperor...."

"Well, if the Emperor wishes to encourage velvet weaving and embroidery, I am very willing to buy dress coats; but as to wearing them, that is another matter."

Madame Ney, hoping that occular might be more effectual than oral persuasion, desired her *femme-de-chambre* to bring in the coat. But when the marshal saw it, he was more resolutely set against it than before, and appealed to us all for our opinions. I must needs confess that the coat was not likely to be very becoming to Marshal Ney. It was of a light colour and was profusely embroidered with flowers; and though in very good taste for a coat of the kind, yet it was perfectly natural that Ney should prefer his general's uniform. In vain did Madame Ney eulogise the coat; her husband was inflexible. At

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length, tormented by our importunities, for we supported the lady, as was our duty, Ney took the coat from the *femme-de-chambre*, and taking hold of her arms, thrust them into the sleeves before the girl knew what he was doing. There stood the poor *femme-de-chambre*, for all the world like one of those wooden horses on which coats and cloaks are hung in the tailors' shops of the Palais Royal. Ney burst into a fit of laughter, and asked us whether we could seriously advise him to dress himself up like a buffoon on *Mardi-Gras*. At this moment, Junot, who had finished dressing, entered in an extremely rich court costume. On seeing him, Ney angrily exclaimed:

"How! Is it possible that you submit to wear this harness?.... Oh Junot...."

Junot, like all present, was much diverted at this little scene. He told Ney that since 1808, he had frequently worn a court dress. But nothing could induce Ney to make any concession. He was determined to go in his uniform, and the embroidered coat was folded up and deposited in a portmanteau to the great satisfaction of the marshal, and the great discomfiture of his lady.

We arrived at Trianon, and shortly after we entered the gallery, we were joined by the Countess du Chatel. We walked through the beautiful alleys of the gardens, the refreshing coolness of which was delicious, after leaving the crowded gallery. The Empress was making her round of the company, which prevented us leaving our places. At length she approached our little co-

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terie, and addressed a few words to each of us, to me she put her usual question :

" Is it as warm as this in Spain ?"

When I had made my reply, and her Majesty had passed us, we withdrew to the fragrant alleys of the gardens, remarking among ourselves the difference between Maria Louisa and Josephine, who always had in readiness some pleasing observation, appropriate to the person to whom it was addressed. Maria Louisa seemed merely to ring the changes of one subject in different keys.

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CHAPTER XI.

Madame Mère—Her household—A comical adventure—Madame de Fleurieu—The Prefect of Toulouse—Too late for dinner—Anecdote of the Prince of Essling—The combat with the tongs—Mademoiselle Massena—Dismissal of Fouché—He is appointed Governor of Rome—Accusations of Cambacerès—Count Dubois—His mission to Fouché—The Emperor's secret papers—Fouché's alarm—Suggestion of Count Dubois—Louis XVIII and the sealed box—M. Czernicheff—His favour among the ladies of Paris—His person and dress described—Count Metternich—Discovery of an old acquaintance.

Soon after my return to France, I resumed my attendance on Madame Mère. She received me with the utmost kindness and affability. Her household was more numerous than it had been when I left her, and the additions made to it were all excellent. Madame Laborde, then a most beautiful woman; Madame de Saint-Sauveur, daughter of the Prince de Masserano; Madame de Rochefort, the mother of Cardinal Bayane, had been appointed ladies in waiting to Madame Mère. The post of *dame pour accompagner Madame Mère* was a most enviable one. She made us all happy.

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One day a curious mistake occurred at the residence of Madame Mère, which made us all laugh very heartily at the hero of the adventure.

Madame was engaged to dine with the Queen of Spain. M. de Beaumont, her equerry had gone to order her carriage, and Madame was sitting in one of the drawing-rooms with Madame de Fleurieu, who was that day lady in waiting. It was evening, and the room was but faintly lighted by the embers of the fire, when the two folding doors opened, and the *valet-de-chambre* ushered in a gentleman dressed in a richly embroidered coat, silk stockings, shoe-buckles, having a sword at his side and a *chapeau bras* in his hand. The gentleman advanced into the apartment, bowed slightly to the two ladies, of whom he caught a glimpse in the twilight, then walked up to the fire-place, warmed his feet, hummed a tune, pulled out his watch, compared notes between it and the time-piece, and then said in a voice loud enough to be heard:

"What the devil is the old fool about?.... Surely, his watch must have stopped."

Madame de Fleurieu knew not what to make of this; she was unable to guess what could have brought a prefect (for she had descried the prefectorial embroidery on the gentleman's coat) to the residence of Madame Mère at that time of day, and especially when she was going out. The lady in waiting was about to ask him what he wanted, when he deliberately advanced to the sofa, and addressing Madame, asked her whether his Se-

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rene Highness would be long making his appearance.

Madame, though generally very affable, was not always able to command herself. She had been surprised and annoyed at the intrusion, and finding herself addressed in this unceremonious way, she lost all patience :

" Monsieur," said she, " I must tell you.... that... .."

" Don't you understand me, Madame. I ask you whether you can tell me when the arch-chancellor will make his appearance."

The mystery was now more inexplicable than before. Madame de Fleurieu was struck dumb, and gazed in silent amazement at the gentleman. The latter shrugged his shoulders, and returned to his post in front of the fire, put his feet on the fender to warm them, and by turns whistled a tune, and muttered words which sounded very much like the imprecations of a hungry man.

Madame de Fleurieu, who thought it high time to put an end to this singular scene, rose from her seat, and advanced towards the gentleman with that air of courtly dignity which she so well knew how to assume when she placed herself in the first position preparatory to a courtesy.

" Monsieur," said she, " will you be kind enough to inform me where you think you are ?"

The gentleman turned round with a careless air, still holding his foot on the fender.

" Where I think I am, Madame ?....I think I am in the house of his Serene Highness the Arch-

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Chancellor of the Empire, who has done me the honour to invite me to dinner. I am much astonished at not seeing him; for half-past five was the hour appointed."

"Monsieur," gravely replied Madame de Fleurieu, "you are not in the arch-chancellor's house. This is the residence of Madame...."

"Madame!.... Madame who, pray?"

"Madame Mère, the mother of his Majesty the Emperor and King."

On hearing this, the gentleman without being at all disconcerted, stepped up to Madame, and said:

"How happy I am! how can I express my gratification at thus having the opportunity of becoming acquainted with the mother of the man to whom I owe so many obligations." He then informed her imperial highness that his name was Desmousseaux, and that he was prefect of Toulouse.

Madame, with her usual affability, received him with the respect due to a public functionary; but the clock struck six, and she said:

"Sir, I would advise you to lose no time. Half-past five is the arch-chancellor's dinner hour. I cannot compensate you for the loss of your dinner; for I am myself engaged to dine with my daughter-in-law."

The prefect took his leave. The mistake was no laughing matter to him. When he descended to the street, he found that the driver of his *voiture de remise*, after having set him down at Madame's door, which he thought was the arch-chancellor's,

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had taken his departure without concerning himself about the fate of the prefect. It rained, the wind blew violently, and the streets were covered with mud. Now, though the arch-chancellor lived in the same street with Madame, yet the two houses were tolerably distant. The poor prefect arrived, wet and splashed, and worse than all, almost famished; for it was now half-past six o'clock. The arch-chancellor had sat down to dinner; for he made it a rule never to wait, except for ladies, or men of very high rank.

Having commenced this chapter with an anecdote, I will add another. It relates to the Prince of Essling.

Every one knows that the prince was very economical; some might say parsimonious. As far as this disposition would permit, he sought to gratify the tastes of a woman who had attached herself to him rather than he to her. He had purchased for her a beautiful house in the Rue de Lille, where the prince frequently visited her; but as she could occupy only a small portion of it, and the prince was a man of economical habits, he thought it would be a good plan to let part of it, and he mentioned his idea to the notary who had sold him the hotel.

This communication was made to the notary precisely at the time when the legislative body was about to be convened. He knew a deputy (Monsiéur de ———), who had come to Paris to attend the session accompanied by his wife and daughter. The latter was a young and beautiful girl, most

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carefully educated. The notary proposed to the deputy that he should take the vacant portion of the marshal's house, and the deputy, pleased at the idea of becoming acquainted with the Prince of Essling, immediately concluded the bargain, and that very evening he and his family were installed in their new abode.

In the apartment which served as a dining-room to the provincial family, there was a glazed door; the panes of glass were covered by a muslin curtain on each side. When the deputy enquired where that door led to, the *concierge* replied that it led to Madame's apartments; but that it was fastened on the other side.

No further notice was taken of this door until the deputy, his wife and daughter sat down to supper, when their attention was attracted by a singular noise proceeding from the apartment with which this door communicated. The noise, which at first appeared merely a faint murmur, increased gradually until they distinctly heard complaints and cries, and at length it became evident that a dispute, and even a fight was going on in the adjoining room. They could not precisely understand the words that were spoken, but the angry and violent tone in which they were uttered was sufficiently obvious. The *crescendo* became louder and louder. China was thrown and broken, and help was called for. In a moment the glass door was almost broken open, and a lady with dishevelled hair, and in her night-dress, rushed into the room, exclaiming:

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"Save me! save me!"

She was followed by a man rather advanced in life. He was in his night-cap and *robe-de-chambre*, and holding in his hand a pair of fire-tongs, with which he appeared to have inflicted a severe correction on the lady. He uttered several violent imprecations, and raised his arm to strike her again. M. de —— stepped before the gentleman in the night-cap, and assumed as respectful a demeanour as possible in the unpleasant task of offering opposition to a grand officer of the empire, for he presumed that the Prince of Essling stood before him, and he was right.

When his passion had somewhat cooled, and the prince found himself amidst a group of strangers, he appeared ashamed; but this feeling was of short duration, he again raised the tongs to add another black stripe to those which already adorned the lady's night-dress. M. and Madame de —— naturally concluded that they were in the presence of the Prince and Princess of Essling. M. de —— held the assailant's arm, and his wife conducted the lady into her own chamber, whilst the veteran marshal brandished the tongs as valiantly as if he had been sword in hand before the enemy.

This affair led to a discovery which astonished Madame de —— no less than the scene of violence she had just witnessed. The *femme-de chambre*, who was summoned to the assistance of her ill used mistress, and who was a true *soubrette de comédie*, dropped some expressions which suffi-

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ciently explained to Madame de ——— that the lady whom she supposed to be the Princess of Essling was not the wife, but only the *friend* of the prince. Next day they removed from the house, and engaged new lodgings.

The deputy and his family remained for some time in Paris; they had brought with them many introductions, and they went into a great deal of gay company. One evening they happened to be at a ball given by the minister of the war department, Mademoiselle de ——— danced in the same quadrille with a young lady, whose beauty and elegant appearance attracted her attention. Mademoiselle de ——— asked her partner who she was.

"That," replied the gentleman, "is one of the richest heiresses in France, and her dowry of glory is as splendid as her dowry of wealth: it is Mademoiselle Massena."

On hearing this name, in itself so famous, and which certain recollections rendered peculiarly remarkable to her, the young lady was several times at fault in the figure of the quadrille, through the interest with which she gazed on Mademoiselle Massena.

"How very pretty she is," said Mademoiselle de ———" but she does not in the least resemble her mother."

"No—the princess is very tall."

"I beg pardon," said Mademoiselle de——" I have seen her; she is very little."

"Judge for yourself," observed her partner, with

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whom she held this discussion, " there she is." And he pointed out a tall lady, still rather young and handsome, next to whom Mademoiselle Massena had seated herself.

" That is not the Princess of Essling," thought Mademoiselle de ———

When the young lady joined her mother, she told her that there was a lady in the ball-room who had been pointed out to her as Madame Massena ; but that she was sure it was a mistake.

" Hush ! hush !" said Madame de ——— who had strictly enjoined her daughter never to speak of the combat with the tongs.

" But look, " said Mademoiselle de ——— "a t the lady, whom I have been informed is the princess."

" I do not see any difference," said her mother ; " it is the same person."

The young lady was confounded — " Nay, mamma," said she, " look again. I am sure that lady is more likely to have beaten the prince, than to have allowed him to beat her."

Mademoiselle de ——— was in the right.

When Fouché was disgraced in 1810, the Duke de Rovigo was appointed to the office of minister of the police. The Emperor yielded, without being aware of it, to an intrigue which had been planned in the interior of his private cabinet. Cambacerès had vowed the ruin of Fouché, and he denounced him to the Emperor. Napoleon never knew the real facts of the case ; he therefore merely dismissed Fouché from his post, and appointed

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him governor of Rome. The arch-chancellor, however, seemed to think he had not fully accomplished the ruin of Fouché, and he returned to the charge. One day, after a sitting of the council of state, the Emperor returned to his cabinet with the arch-chancellor, and in a few moments he was heard speaking loudly and in a furious rage.

Count Dubois, a chancellor of state, who was then prefect of police, was at that moment leaving the palace,* and about to step into his carriage. He heard some one call him, and on turning round, he saw the Emperor in the balcony which fronted the window of his cabinet, calling and beckoning him to return.

"Dubois!—Dubois!—come back immediately!" said he.

The prefect was both astonished and alarmed at the agitated manner of the Emperor, whom he had left perfectly calm, only a few moments previously. He of course instantly returned.

On entering the cabinet, he found the Emperor alone with the arch-chancellor. Cambacerès was as usual quite calm, but Napoleon was in a state of nervous excitement which rendered him incapable of knowing what he said or did. On his desk lay a sheet of paper, on which he had written a few lines which were perfectly illegible. He walked up and down for a few moments, then

* This happened at St. Cloud; I here allude to Fouché's first disgrace.

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suddenly stopping, and addressing himself to Count Dubois, he said :

" That Fouché is a villain ! a treacherous villain ! He wants to treat me as he did his convention, and his directory, which he so basely betrayed and sold.... But I am not so short-sighted as Barras, and with me he will not find it so easy a matter.... He has notes and instructions of *mine*, which I desire he will deliver up."

All this was uttered with great rapidity and violence.

" I know," added Napoleon, still addressing Count Dubois, " that Fouché and you are not friends ; but no matter—you must go to him, and execute an important mission—important to himself ; for it concerns his life."

" Sire," said Count Dubois, " may I beg to be exempt from the honour your Majesty is about to confer on me—you have yourself just now observed, that the Duke d'Otranto is my enemy—consider then how painful this duty will be to me."

" Silence," said the Emperor, " I am going to entrust you with a mission which you alone can execute....hear me....Fouché, while in office, received from me many orders, notes, and confidential letters written in my own hand !..... When I demanded these papers, which he would voluntarily have given up, had he been an honest man, what answer do you think he returned to me ?—He said he had burned them. He !—Fouché burn papers of importance—no, no, he

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is not so simple as that. The fact is, he has now *my papers* in his possession; and I insist upon his restoring them.—You must go to his chateau at Ferrières, where he now is, and desire him in my name to surrender up these papers.... Should he refuse, place him in the custody of a dozen gendarmes, and let him be taken to the Abbaye. Par Dieu! I will shew him that he shall have a speedy trial... Well! why do you hesitate?"

"Sire, what papers am I to ask for?....your Majesty should have a list of them....suppose he should give me ten, and he should have thirty."

"You are right—sit down." So saying he pushed Count Dubois into the chair in which he had been sitting himself, and desired him to write on the scribbled sheet of paper which lay on the desk. He then began to dictate, but with such rapidity that Count Dubois could not follow him.

At length he threw himself into a chair, and said, "The fact is, I can neither dictate nor write.—Take this list, incomplete as it is, it will answer your purpose.—Seal the rest of the papers and I will afterwards examine them — set off instantly."

Count Dubois procured post horses, and started immediately for Ferrières, where he arrived before night. He found the vestibule and all the avenues of the house filled with packages and trunks directed to, "*Monsieur le Gouverneur de Rome.*"

The governor himself presently appeared, and

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M. Dubois explained to him in as delicate a way as he could, the nature of his visit.

" I give up his notes!" exclaimed Fouché, rising and pacing up and down the room like a madman. " I give up his notes!....and where am I to find them?—They are all burnt....I have sworn it, and am ready to swear it again!"

The oath of course was not likely to embarrass him; but Count Dubois had precise and positive orders, and they were not to be eluded by any trifling; the count knew that his mission must be executed, and he felt himself under the necessity of pronouncing the word Abbaye.

No sooner had he uttered it, than a livid hue overspread the countenance of Fouché, and Count Dubois feared he would faint. His limbs trembled under him, and he threw himself into his arm-chair.

" The Abbaye!.." he exclaimed, " send me to the Abbaye!—What does he mean to do?—To bring me to trial?" He was in a painful state of agitation. The prefect endeavoured to calm him, and again spoke of delivering up the papers.

" But I tell you they are all destroyed..... burnt!....Do you think I would have kept in my possession, papers which would not only have ruined me, but would have ruined my children, and my children's children, to the third and fourth generation." And he paced about the apartment clasping his hands in a state of agony.

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Count Dubois pitied him; though he had always been the object of Fouché's malevolence. "Listen to me," said he; "I will do for you, what I hope you would do for another in similar circumstances. I will tell the Emperor that you would not allow me to see the papers, and that Real has only to come here and break the seals. Real is, I believe your friend. With the Emperor, it is only the first fit of anger that is to be feared.... When once he sleeps on his displeasure, there are seldom any traces of it remaining in the morning. Compose yourself, and all will be well."

He accordingly collected together a parcel of old unimportant papers; for after all there appeared to be no others,* and Count Dubois having sealed them, took his leave of the disgraced minister. When he returned to Paris, to report the result of his mission, the Emperor was at first exceedingly angry; but the prefect at length succeeded in convincing him, that the papers had really been burnt. "Fouché's alarm is a sufficient proof, that they were destroyed," said Count Dubois. Send another counsellor of state to Ferrières, for the business of my department will not permit me to go there every day. Your Majesty can send Real or any one you please."

* Count Dubois, when conversing with me on this subject, assured me, that he thought the papers had actually been burnt. Yet after Fouché's death a sealed box was delivered to Louis XVIII, in compliance with the orders of the deceased minister.

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The Emperor consented to this. Real was sent to Ferrières, where he examined, and made a report upon the papers sealed up by Count Dubois. The result of this affair was the appointment of the Duke of Rovigo to the office of minister of the police.

The same cabal, which had brought about the disgrace of Fouché, caused the dismissal of Count Dubois six months after. As to the Duke of Otranto, his appointment to the Governorship of Rome was almost nominal, and he underwent a sort of exile, until the moment when, for the misfortune of France, he again returned to the ministry.

Meanwhile important events were gathering on the political horizon. Russia preserved an inexplicable silence in spite of the cajoleries of her ambassador M. de Czernicheff. This gentleman during the period of his diplomatic mission to Paris had contrived to ingratiate himself most completely in the favour of the fair sex. Indeed the admiration he excited appeared something like infatuation. What there was in M. Czernicheff to warrant this admiration, I know not. He was no doubt a clever and agreeable man; but he was by no means anxious to please; not because he preferred one woman to another; but because all were alike indifferent to him. Such, at least, is the effect which he produced on me, the first evening I saw him at a party at the Tuileries. I confess that I looked at him with all the curiosity which had been excited by the letters of my female friends, and which described him as the

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greatest lady-killer who had appeared in our saloons for some time past.

On the evening of the party above mentioned at the Tuileries, M. de Narbonne had dined with me, and he escorted me to the palace. When I entered the *Salle du Trône*, I looked attentively among the group of distinguished foreigners, who stood reverently bending before the embroidered N on the empty arm chair of the throne—for the Emperor had not yet arrived. I saw no one among them, who appeared to me to deserve the title of a lady-killer. There were several of my female friends near me, who, had I asked the question, would immediately have pointed out M. Czernicheff; but I wished to find him out myself. I looked at my friend M. de Narbonne, who, with his eyes, directed me towards a part of the *salle* where I saw a tall young man. His figure was not particularly good, and his air was neither vulgar nor dignified. It was precisely what we used at that time to call the *tournure étrangère*. M. de Metternich and M. Czernicheff may be said to be two perfect models in this particular style, viz :—the union of extreme elegance with manners, which bore no resemblance to those of our *salons* of 1787. Count Metternich, though he had not a grey hair in his head, wore powder, which gave him a venerable air, perfectly in accordance with his Knight of Malta's uniform. His manners were courteous and easy, and precisely those of a well-bred nobleman. The manners of M. Czer-

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nicheff were equally elegant; but they had more of *étrangeté* if I may use the term. This peculiarity also characterized his dress and personal appearance. His wasp-like waist, his hat, his plume, his hair arranged in large curls, his Tartar countenance, his Chinese eyes presented an original and curious *ensemble*.

But one thing which surprised me more than all, was to find M. Czernicheff an old acquaintance.

Two years previously, when I was at a bal given by the Duke de Cadore, then minister for foreign affairs, I was engaged to waltz with a young Russian officer, who having arrived that night, and being about to set off next day, had been brought by M. de Champagny to see a French ball. The officer was very young, and not having at that time a sufficiently high rank to entitle him to dance with one of the imperial princesses, he addressed himself to me, and his vanity was gratified by being introduced as the envoy of a Czar, who was his friend. He had seen me open the ball in the Princess Caroline's quadrille, and knew that I was the wife of the Governor of Paris. This Russian officer was M. Czernicheff. I recognized him immediately, for his appearance was too peculiar to be easily forgotten.

When Napoleon entered, he stopped and conversed for a considerable time with M. Czernicheff, whom he treated with all the attention due to the favourite of his brother, the Czar. He stood

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very high in the good graces of Napoleon, and he might have stood higher still, had he acted with sincerity instead of meanly prying into the portfolio of the minister of war, and dangling after a lady, whose husband was the depository of the Emperor's personal secrets.

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CHAPTER XII.

The Emperor's altered appearance—The young King of Rome—His calèche drawn by deer—Napoleon at play with his son—Rejoicings in honor of the birth of the King of Rome—His christening—Maria Louisa's accouchement—Baron Dubois—Napoleon playing with his son—Madame de Montesquiou—Madame de Montebello — Baptising of the King of Rome —His names—Royal vows—Young Napoleon's violence of temper—Madame de Montesquiou's mode of correcting him—Apathy of Maria Louisa—Trait of benevolence on the part of the young King—The widow and the orphan.

On my return to France I found the Emperor much altered in appearance. His features had acquired a paternal character,—if I may use the expression. That beautiful line of Victor Hugo :

" Les cœurs de lion sont les vrais cœurs de père"

conveys a just idea of Napoleon whilst caressing his son.

What a beautiful child was the young King of Rome! How lovely he appeared as he rode through the gardens of the Tuileries in his shell-shaped calèche, drawn by two young deer, which had been trained by Franconi, and which were given him by his aunt, the Queen of Naples.

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He resembled one of those figures of Cupid which have been discovered in the ruins of Herculaneum.

One day I had been visiting the young King, the Emperor was also there, and he was playing with the child—as he always played with those he loved—that is to say, by tormenting him. The Emperor had been riding, and he had in his hand a whip which attracted the child's notice. He held out his little hand, and when he seized the whip, burst into a fit of laughter, at the same time embracing his father.

" Is he not a fine boy, Madame Junot," said the Emperor, " you must confess that he is."

I could say so without flattery, for he was certainly a lovely boy.

As soon as the King of Rome was born, the event was announced by telegraph to all the principal towns in the empire. At four o'clock the same afternoon, the marks of rejoicing in the provinces equalled those in Paris. The Emperor's couriers, pages, and officers were despatched to the different foreign courts with intelligence of the happy event. The senate of Italy, and the municipal body of Rome and Milan had immediate notice of it. The different fortresses received orders to fire salutes, the sea-ports were enlivened by the display of colours from the vessels, and everywhere the people voluntarily illuminated their houses. Those who regard these popular demonstrations as expressions of the secret sentiment of a people, might have remarked that in all the faubourgs, as well as in the lowest and

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poorest neighbourhoods in Paris, the houses were illuminated to the very uppermost stories.

A fête was got up on the occasion by the watermen of the Seine, which was prolonged until a late hour of the night. Nothing of all this was ordered: it came spontaneously from the hearts of the people. That same people, who for thirty-five years previously had experienced so many emotions, had wept over so many reverses, and had rejoiced for so many victories, still shewed by their enthusiasm on this occasion, that they retained affections as warm and vivid as in the morning of their greatness.

The King of Rome was baptised on the very day of his birth. The ceremony was performed at nine in the evening, in the chapel of the Tuileries. The whole of the imperial family attended, and the Emperor witnessed the ceremony with the deepest emotion. Napoleon proceeded to the chapel followed by the members of the household, those of the Empress, of Madame Mère, the Princesses his sisters, and the Kings his brothers. He took his station under a canopy in the centre of the chapel. A socle of granite had been placed on a carpet of white velvet embroidered in gold bees, and on the socle stood a gold vase destined for the baptismal font. When the Emperor approached the font bearing the King of Rome in his arms, the most profound silence pervaded. It was a religious silence, unaccompanied by the parade which might have been expected on such an occasion. This stillness

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formed a striking contrast with the joyous acclamations of the people outside.

Maria Louisa suffered a difficult and protracted accouchement. She was for some time in considerable danger. Baron Dubois went to acquaint the Emperor with this circumstance. Napoleon was in a bath, which he had been ordered to take to calm the feverish excitement under which he was suffering. On hearing that the Empress was in danger, he threw on his *robe-de-chambre*, and ran down stairs, exclaiming to Dubois :

" Save the mother ! think only of the mother !"

As soon as she was delivered, the Emperor, who was himself indisposed, entered the chamber and ran to embrace her, without at first bestowing a single look upon his son, who indeed might have passed for dead. Nearly ten minutes elapsed before he evinced any signs of life. Every method to produce animation was resorted to. Warm napkins were wrapped round him, and his body was rubbed with the hand ; a few drops of brandy were then blown into his mouth, and the royal infant at length uttered a feeble cry.

An immense multitude besieged the doors of the palace to obtain intelligence of the infant and of the Empress. The Emperor, on learning this, directed that a chamberlain should be constantly in one of the rooms to publish the bulletins of the Empress's health as soon as they were delivered by the physicians.

I have already mentioned the Emperor's fondness for his son. He used to take the King of

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Rome in his arms and toss him up in the air. The child would then laugh till the tears stood in his eyes; sometimes the Emperor would take him before a looking glass, and work his face into all sorts of grimaces; and if the child was frightened and shed tears, Napoleon would say:—

"What, Sire, do you cry? A king, and cry? Shame! shame!"

The hours at which the young King was taken to the Emperor were not precisely fixed, nor could they be; but his visits were most frequently at the time of *déjeûner*. On these occasions the Emperor would give the child a little claret, or rather would dip his finger in the glass and make him suck it. Sometimes he would daub the young Prince's face with it. The child would laugh heartily at seeing his father as much a child as he was himself, and only loved him the more for it. Children invariably love those who play with them.

I recollect that once when Napoleon had daubed the young King's face, the child was highly amused, and asked the Emperor to do the same to *Maman Quiou*, for so he called his governess Madame de Montesquiou.

The Emperor's selection of that lady for his son's governess was a proof of his excellent judgment. It was the best choice which could have been made. Madame de Montesquiou was young enough to render herself agreeable to a child, whilst she had sufficient maturity of years to fit her for the high duty which the confidence

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of her sovereign had appointed her to fulfil. She was noble in heart as well as in name; and she possessed what the world frequently bestows only on fortune and favour—the esteem of all. She was indeed universally beloved and respected.

Madame de Montesquiou had been brought up rather differently from the young ladies of her time. Extreme care had been taken with her education, and she was pious without being bigotted. She never failed going to mass on Sundays, but she did so without parade; for her piety was as enlightened as it was sincere. Her reputation was free from the slightest blemish. She was perhaps a little cold towards those with whom she was but slightly acquainted, but those who condemn any one for haughtiness, should consider whether it is not dignity alone which strikes us as a blemish. For my part, I ever found Madame de Montesquiou, whether as the wife of the grand chamberlain, or as the governess of the King of Rome, perfectly engaging, polite and prepossessing. Every one respected her, and wished to be numbered among her friends.

The attentions she bestowed on the King of Rome during the period of his father's misfortunes, would in itself be sufficient to inspire love and respect. Not only had she, from the hour of his birth, lavished on him all the cares of a mother, and a tender mother; but from the day when the unfortunate child was cut off from all his family, and deprived at once of his father and mother, Madame de Montesquiou devoted herself to him,

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for she alone was left to protect him. To accompany him, she deserted country, friends, and family.

Madame de Montesquiou was not liked by the Empress, and the cause has never been satisfactorily ascertained. It has been said that the Duchess of Montebello, Maria Louisa's favourite, was jealous of her. This I do not believe. The Duchess of Montebello is a very amiable woman; she was beloved by the Empress to a degree which would have precluded all jealousy of another; and besides the feeling of envy is not in accordance with her character. She is too amiable a woman to have engaged in any intrigue to estrange Maria Louisa from the governess of her son.

The fact, however, is as I have stated. Maria Louisa did not like Madame de Montesquiou, a woman whom she ought to have loved as a sister, or as a mother for the care she bestowed on her son. It has been said by way of compliment to Maria Louisa, that she never did any one an injury; yet she possessed an apathy of soul, from the influence of which the governess of her child was not exempt. And what sort of love did she shew for her own child? I have seen Maria Louisa, when she was mounting or alighting from her horse, nod her plumed head to him, which never failed to set him crying; for he was frightened by the undulation of her feathers. At other times when she did not go out, she would repair at four o'clock to his apartment. On these occasions she would take with her a

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piece of tapestry, at which she would sit down and make a shew of working, looking now and then at the little King and saying as she nodded her head:—"*Bonjour, bonjour.*"

Perhaps after the lapse of a quarter of an hour, the *august mother* would be informed that Isabey or Paer were in attendance in her apartments; the one to give her lessons in drawing, the other in music. It would have been as well, had she remained longer every day with her child, to take a lesson in maternal feeling from the woman who so admirably supplied her place. But it would have been of little use,—feeling is not to be taught.

Every morning at nine o'clock the young King was taken to the Empress. She would sometimes hold him on her lap, caress him, and then commit him to the care of the nurse. And how did she employ herself afterwards? she read the papers, the *blätter* as they call them in Germany. When the child grew peevish because he was not amused as his father used to amuse him, and cried at finding himself surrounded by serious and formal faces, his mother ordered him out of the room.

When I arrived in Paris on my return from Spain, the Emperor and Empress had just completed a tour in the north of France, in the departments of Calvados and la Manche. The christening of the King of Rome took place on their return from this journey. There have already been so many descriptions of this ceremony, that it would be superfluous to enter into

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a fresh detail of it. I will merely mention that the young Prince received names which shew that the alliances formed by sovereigns, the vows made at the baptismal font, the adoption by every religious formality and the ties of blood are mere fallacies. He was christened Napoleon-François-Charles-Joseph! these are the names of his godfathers; they stand upon the register of his baptism, and they also appear on the tomb which closed over him at the early age of twenty-one.

One day at Trianon when the young King was but a year old, the Emperor was playing with him upon the grass plot before the Pavillion. He took off his sword, girded it on the young Prince, and completed his military costume by placing his hat on his head. He then went himself to some distance, knelt upon the grass and extended his hands to the child, who walked towards him stumbling all the way, because of the sword getting between his legs, and the hat falling over his face. Perceiving this, the Emperor ran to him with all the nimbleness of a young man, and caught him in his arms to prevent his falling.

One of the ushers of the chamber, with whom I was lately conversing, wept like a child at his recollections of the young Prince. This man told me that the King of Rome one morning ran to the state apartments, and reached the door of the Emperor's cabinet alone, for Madame de Montesquiou was unable to follow him. The child raised his beautiful face to the usher, and said:

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" Open the door for me ; I wish to see papa."

" Sire," replied the man, " I cannot let your Majesty in."

" Why not ? I am the little King."

" But your Majesty is alone."

The Emperor had given orders that his son should not be allowed to enter his cabinet unless accompanied by his governess. This order was issued for the purpose of giving the young Prince, whose disposition was somewhat inclined to waywardness, a high idea of his governess's authority. On receiving this denial from the usher, the prince's eyes became suffused with tears, but he said not a word. He waited till Madame de Montesquiou came up, which was in less than a minute afterwards. Then he seized her hand, and looking proudly at the usher, he said :

" Open the door. The little King desires it."

The usher then opened the door of the cabinet and announced,

" His Majesty the King of Rome."

A great deal has been said of the young king's violent temper. It is true he was self-willed and was easily excited to passion ; but this was one of the distinctive characteristics of his cousins ; they almost all partook of similar hastiness of temper. I have known Achille Murat so overcome by violent passion, as to be thrown into convulsions, and this when he was of the same age as the King of Rome. Madame de Montesquiou once corrected the young King for these fits of

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passion. On one occasion, when he was very violent, she had all the shutters of the windows closed, though it was broad daylight. The child astonished to find the light of day excluded and the candles lighted up, enquired of his governess why the shutters were closed.

" In order that no one may hear you, Sire," replied she. " The French would never have you for their King, if they knew you to be so naughty."

" Have I," said he, " cried very loud ?"

" You have."

" But did any one hear me."

" I fear they have."

Then he fell to weeping, but these were tears of repentance. He threw his little arms round his governess's neck.

" I will never do so again, Mamma Quiou ! " said he, " forgive me."

It happened one day that the King of Rome entered the Emperor's cabinet just as the council had finished their deliberations. He ran up to his father without taking notice of any one in the room. Napoleon, though happy to observe these marks of affection, so natural and coming so directly from the heart, stopped him and said :

" You have not made your bow, Sire ! Come, make your obedience to these gentlemen."

The child turned, and bowing his head gently, kissed his little hand to the ministers. The Emperor then raised him in his arms, and addressing them, said :

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" I hope, gentlemen, it will not be said that I neglect my son's education. I trust he is well drilled in his *civilité puérile et honnête.*"

Those who had much familiar intercourse with Napoleon, knew that the phrase *civilité puérile et honnête*, was a favourite with him when he was in a good humour.

Young Napoleon was an amiable child, and he became more so as he advanced in age. I know many affecting stories of him, which indicate the goodness of his heart.

When he was at St. Cloud, he liked to be placed at the window in order that he might see the people passing by. One day he perceived at some distance a young woman apparently in great grief, holding by the hand a little boy about the young King's age. Both were habited in mourning. The child held in his hands a paper which he raised towards the window at which young Napoleon stood.

" Why is he dressed in black ?" enquired the young King of his governess.

" Because, no doubt, he has lost his father. Do you wish to know what he wants ?"

The Emperor had given orders that his son should always be accessible to those in misfortune, who wished to make any application to him by petition. The petitioners were immediately introduced, and they proved to be a young widow and her son. Her husband had died about three months previously of some wounds he had received in Spain, and his widow solicited a pension.

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Madame de Montesquiou, thinking that this conformity of age between the little orphan and the young King might move the feelings of the latter, placed the petition in his hands. She was not deceived in her expectations. His heart was touched at the sight of the young petitioner. The Emperor was then on a hunting party, and the petition could not be presented to him until next morning at breakfast. Young Napoleon passed the whole of the day in thoughtfulness, and when the appointed hour arrived, he left his apartment to pay his respects to his father. He took care to present the petition apart from all the rest he carried, and this of his own accord.

" Here is a petition, papa," said he, " from a little boy. He is dressed all in black.* His papa has been killed in your service, and his mamma wants a pension, because she is poor and has much to vex her."

" Ah! ah!" said the Emperor, taking his son in his arms, " You already grant pensions, do you? Diable! you have begun betimes. Come, let us see who this protégé of yours is."

The widow had sufficient grounds for her claim; but in all probability they would not have been attended to for a year or two had it not been for the King of Rome's intercession. The brevet of the pension was made out that very day, and a year's arrears added to the order.

* It would seem that the mournful habiliments of the child had made a strong impression on the young prince's mind.

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Who can have forgotten the day when the Emperor took his son to a review in the Champ de Mars? How his features brightened with pleasure on hearing the joyous acclamations raised by his veteran bands.

"Was he frightened?" enquired the Empress.

"Frightened! no, surely," replied Napoleon. "He knew he was surrounded by his father's friends."

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CHAPTER XIII.

Mr. Hamilton, the English minister for foreign affairs—Projected alliance between Great Britain and Spain—Count Charles de Châtillon—The Emperor's ideas respecting the war in Spain—Suchet and the Marshal's baton—Taking of Mount Serrat and Valencia—Capitulation of Valencia — Napoleon's recollections at St. Helena—Dr. O'Meara—Madame Campan—Probability of the French supremacy in Spain—The confederation of the north—Bad faith of Russia—Probable sincerity of the Emperor Alexander—The treaty of Tilsitt — Humiliation of Russia—A Reprisal—Characteristics of the Russian nation—The Duke de Vicenza's embassy to St. Petersburg —The Duke de Rovigo—The affair of the Duke d'Enghien —The Duke of Vicenza recalled to France—General Lauriston sent in his stead.

In 1811 Mr. Hamilton, the English minister for foreign affairs, conceived the project of forming an alliance with Spain. This was a bold but excellent plan ; yet it was not easy of execution, because no relations then existed between Spain and Great Britain. Mr. Hamilton adopted the following scheme to accomplish his object. He employed a Frenchman, who was an emigrant in England. This Frenchman was Count Charles de Châtillon, a man distinguished for his talents

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and excellent character. I knew him well, and he has frequently related to me all the particulars of this affair. He was directed to go to Madrid, and to inform Joseph that England would recognise him as King of Spain and the Indies, on condition of his sending away all the French who were in the Peninsula, to which Great Britain pledged herself to ensure complete inviolability of territory. Mr. Hamilton was the same minister who had already proposed to Lucien to form a sort of league against France and the Emperor. The disaster of Moscow, however, obviated the necessity of attempting to execute Mr. Hamilton's schemes relative to Spain. As to Joseph, I think I may say with confidence, that he loved his brother too well, and prized his own honour too highly to accede to the proposition.

The Emperor had conceived singular notions respecting the war in Spain; he had heard the opinions of men well acquainted with the subject, and yet nothing could break the delusive spell which the hope of that conquest had thrown over him. Thus, the mortification he experienced at a check, was manifested in the reception which he gave to Massena, and the gratification of a triumph was expressed in the reward given to Suchet.

It was in allusion to the taking of Tarragona, that the Emperor said:

"Suchet..... the Marshal's baton is in Tarragona," and Suchet gained it!

The Emperor had greatly changed since the time when he commanded the army of Italy. At

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Lodi, and at Arcola, he threw himself into the midst of the enemy's fire to induce his soldiers to follow him:—now he threw a baton into the trench, and said, "Go and fetch it."

The brave Suchet, as an acknowledgment of the Emperor's bounty, immediately took Mount Serrat; that fortified mountain of which each hermitage was a redoubt, and every hermit a staunch partizan. The kingdom of Valencia next opened before the army of Arragon. The port of Oropesa, and its old walls were stained with the blood of Suchet. At length he arrived before Valencia and entered it victoriously. To Suchet, the war of Spain was merely a military tour; and at his resting places, he planted the national flag on the Moorish or Roman walls of the ancient cities, which are scattered through the provinces of Spain.

The Emperor conceived a cordial friendship for Marshal Suchet. He overwhelmed him with marks of favour. Titles, fortune, rank, all were lavishly bestowed upon him. The title of Duke of Albufera was accompanied by a majorat producing a rental of 500,000 livres. This was the richest endowment that Napoleon ever made.

The war had long kept the Duke of Albufera distant from Paris; he was absent for seven years. At the expiration of that time he returned to France, which he had left in the rank of a general commanding a division; possessing, it is true a good military reputation; but still merely a general. When he returned, he was a Marshal of the Em-

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pire, a Duke, a Colonel of the Imperial Guard, and Commander-in-chief of the two armies of Catalonia and Arragon. Thus, when the Emperor saw him, he said:—

"Marshal Suchet, you have grown a great deal since I saw you last."

Napoleon said at St. Helena, in those hours of captivity whose languor he tried to divert by his recollections of past happiness:

"Suchet was a man, the vigour of whose mind and character encreased wonderfully."

All will admit that words pronounced on a death-bed have so solemn a character that the voice which utters them, however feeble, vibrates for ever in the mind. The words I have above quoted were addressed to Dr. O'Meara, and as I conceive that the agonies of death commenced with Napoleon from the day when he set foot on St. Helena, I regard every word he uttered on his rock of exile as those of a dying man.

Being questioned one day by Dr. O'Meara respecting his (Napoleon's) opinion of the generals whom he had left in France, he replied:

"I give the preference to Suchet. Before his time Massena was the first; but he may be considered as dead.—Suchet, Clausel and Gerard, are now in my opinion the best French generals."

The Memoirs of Madame Campan mention that Napoleon speaking of Suchet, once said:—

"It is a pity that sovereigns cannot *improvize* men like him."

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" If I had had two marshals such as Suchet," said Napoleon to Madame Campan, " I should not only have conquered Spain, but I should have kept it."

The powerful efforts made by Napoleon to sustain himself in Spain seemed likely, about the close of the year 1811, to lead to the submission of that country. We were established in Catalonia and Arragon by the victories of Suchet; whilst advancing to the gates of Cadiz, we were completing the conquest of the four kingdoms of Andalusia. The passage of the Sierra-Morena ;—the dispersion of the central Junta—the extraordinary Cortes assembled at the Isle of Leon, issuing every day contradictory decrees—the Council of Regency, still disputing with the other authorities—those troubles which the heads of the new government had not the power or perhaps the will to check—all this placed us in an advantageous posture. King Joseph must have remarked it in his visit to Andalusia, the whole of which he journeyed through, and had ample opportunities of convincing himself, that every where the people were weary of the war. The Spaniards disliked the English, and were averse to any union with them. Consequently, in spite of the victories of Lord Wellington, our precipitate retreat and all the misfortunes of the Arapiles, the probability is, that we might have kept Spain. The Spaniards themselves were of this opinion, hundreds of families returned to the mother country, and accepted office under the new government; and

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as was observed by a brave and patriotic Spaniard (Don Gonzalo O'Farrill), applicants multiplied to as great an extent as in the most peaceful days of the monarchy.

But when threats were uttered by the fraternal mouth of the Emperor of Russia—when the Emperor Francis forgot that Napoleon was his son-in-law—when Prussia forgot all her solemn pledges of friendship and alliance—when, in short the formidable league of the north began to count its legions to ascertain whether it was strong enough to resist France—then the ill-feeling of the Peninsula was revived, and the little confidence which our troops had recovered was lost. England forseeing our disasters in the north of Europe exerted herself, and increased her efforts in the Peninsula.

One of the columns of his empire, on the stability of which Napoleon most confidently relied, was the confederation of the north. This confederation, which was originally conceived by Henry IV and executed by Napoleon, would have been a glorious work, had it been accomplished for other purposes than those which Napoleon had in view. He committed another grand mistake in utterly neglecting the German people. He courted the confederate sovereigns, whilst their subjects were the real power which he ought to have conciliated.

A treaty had been concluded between Russia and the Porte, and it was alleged that Napoleon knew nothing of it. Whether this was or was not the fact, may be a matter of doubt; but it is

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certain that Russia had begun to evince ill faith. She kept up the mask of friendship which she had assumed at Tilsitt, merely because she did not think the moment was yet favourable for raising the standard of war. Before I enter upon a narrative of the events of 1812 and 1813, I must lay before the reader a few details of previous date.

When the treaty of Tilsitt was signed between Alexander and Napoleon, it will scarcely be imagined that the latter could be so far imposed upon, as to place faith in an alliance founded only on pretended sentiments of esteem and friendship. The natural conclusion is, that there was some degree of sincerity in the sentiment so loudly proclaimed by the Emperor Alexander. The fact is, that from the moment when Napoleon forced Russia to sign a treaty which was calculated to degrade her in the eyes of the whole world, he ought to have fairly expected a reprisal. Massena, by beating Korsakoff on the Limuth, had dimmed the brilliant legacy of glory left by Catherine II. Austerlitz further obscured it, and the Polish war and the treaty of Tilsitt completed the humiliation. Napoleon was therefore guilty of imprudence, to use no stronger term in withdrawing his forces from the north, to transfer them to Spain and Italy, thus leaving the field open to Alexander. The fault was not less a fault, even admitting it to have been the result of too great confidence, for confidence is always a weakness in one sovereign to another. Besides, the death of Paul I might have shewn Napoleon that Russia, though go-

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verned as despotically as a kingdom of India, had a mode of rendering justice to herself, which no tribunal would have ventured to condemn. Since the time of Peter the Great, the Russian nation (that is to say the body of the nation,) had made no advance in the civilisation of Europe. The Russian nobility had indeed copied from us all our vices and imbibed our taste for luxury, but the Russian people remained unchanged. They still cherished that thirst of conquest, but not of glory, which is inspired in a barbarous people by a despotic ruler.

The whole of the year 1811 was spent in the interchange of fruitless communications. On the 5th of April, the Duke de Bassano was appointed minister for foreign affairs. On the 6th, he addressed a note to Prince Kourakin to demand explanations. In his answer, the prince again spoke of the Duchy of Oldenburgh. He might as well have talked of the dowry of Queen Mandane. The prince was asked what was meant by the army of 80,000 men who were assembling by order of the cabinet of St. Petersburg. The ambassador, like a pacific man as he was, replied that the Duke de Bassano was probably jesting with him; that he knew of no army, and that such questions were very annoying to the Emperor, his master.

The cause of several of our misfortunes—I may perhaps say, our greatest misfortunes during the year 1811, may be traced to the embassy of the Duke of Vicenza to St. Petersburg. This will not

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appear surprising when I relate the following particulars.

Napoleon had sent the Duke de Rovigo to St. Petersburg, not in the quality of ambassador, but merely as extraordinary envoy. The attentions which the Emperor Alexander had shewn the duke at Austerlitz and Erfurt, led Napoleon to presume that he could not make a better choice of an envoy.

But it was necessary to think of an ambassador. The Emperor, who had his caprices like every body else, attached great importance to external qualifications in making a choice of this kind. The Duke de Vicenza was a man of handsome figure and dignified deportment. His manners were as elegant as those of any man in France. He was noble in himself, and he had been ennobled by Napoleon. These considerations, joined to others, which I do not pretend to know, caused the Duke of Vicenza to be appointed ambassador from France to St. Petersburg.

But no sooner was this appointment known in the salons of St. Petersburg, than it was unanimously resolved, that M. de Caulaincourt should *not be received by any body*. This determination was dictated by no feelings of hostility to France; for the Duke de Rovigo was cordially received in every circle. One day the subject being alluded to in the presence of the Duke de Rovigo, he enquired what there was objectionable in the new ambassador, when he was informed that M. de Cau-

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laincourt could not be received in any house of St. Petersburg on account of the terrible affair of the Duke d'Enghien.

Savary had his faults, but he also had merits, which in some measure counterbalanced them.—He was a good Frenchman, and was sincerely attached to the Emperor. On hearing a charge which struck immediately at his master, and whose counter-stroke rebounded upon his comrade, he became irritated, and several warm altercations ensued between him, and some individuals of the court of St. Petersburg. On one of these occasions he lost all self-command, and addressing himself to a gentleman who had spoken in an offensive way on the subject in question, said:—

"You are mistaken, Sir, the Duke of Vicenza had nothing to do with the affair of the Duke d'Enghien. It was I,....I, who now have the honour of addressing you, who ordered the prince to be shot."

The person to whom these words were spoken, stood almost petrified, and could not utter a word in reply.

On his return to Paris, the Duke de Rovigo found M. de Caulaincourt preparing to set out on his embassy, and he frankly told him all the difficulties he would have to encounter, together with the cause in which they originated. M. de Caulaincourt was alarmed; for though brave on the field of battle he had not the spirit requisite to face danger in private life. He thought of resigning his appointment; but that was impossible. How

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could he present himself to the Emperor and say:—

"Sire, I cannot go to St. Petersburg, because I am accused of having *delivered up* the Duke d'Enghien to you!"

In his perplexity he flew to consult B... r, and after a long deliberation, the following plan was determined on to relieve the Duke of Vicenza from his embarrassment. A series of instructions were drawn up, so as to appear as if they had been given by B... r in the Emperor's name, at the time of the death of the Duke d'Enghien, and the Duke of Vicenza set out provided with his defence.

On his arrival at St. Petersburg he found, as Savary had announced, a formidable league raised against him. No visit was paid to him, and when any one was under the necessity of saluting him, it was done as coldly as possible.

The Duke of Vicenza was too high spirited to submit to this sort of treatment. He appealed to the Czar himself, and demanded justice. The Emperor Alexander expressed such violent displeasure against the offenders, that he seemed ready to send the whole of his court to Tobolsk. The Duke of Vicenza thought this was the proper moment for presenting his justification.

"This accusation is the more painful to me," said he to the Emperor, "inasmuch as I am not guilty, which I can easily prove."

Thereupon he put his hand in his pocket and drew out his defence, which he constantly carried

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about with him, and presenting it to the Emperor, begged he would read it; but Alexander was more than satisfied. An ambassador from Napoleon! a duke of the empire! a grand officer of the crown of France was kneeling before him, and praying not only that he would protect him, but compel his subjects to show honour to him! The Duke of Vicenza did not comprehend the peculiar positions in which the Emperor Alexander and he himself stood; but the Czar was shrewd enough to judge them at a glance. He profited by his advantage; he raised the Duke of Vicenza and thought he could not do better than grant him his friendship. By securing a claim on the gratitude of Napoleon's ambassador, the position of that ambassador became an affair which he had at his disposal. He therefore spared no efforts to conciliate the feelings of a man who could never have been induced to become a traitor. It was, indeed, with the most entire devotedness to the Emperor Napoleon that M. de Caulaincourt ruined the interests of his master.

A person who was an eye-witness to this scene, of the grand drama of 1812, assured me that it was curious to see the impatience of M. de Caulaincourt, when he was urged to bring the cabinet of St. Petersburg to an explanation on the subject of the army of eighty thousand men, which was then being organized.

"No such thing is in agitation," he wrote to the Duke of Bassano. "It is the more to be lamented that these reports should be suffered to

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reach the Emperor Napoleon; since the Emperor Alexander is much displeased even at the appearance of his distrust."

His blindness was inconceivable to those who were ignorant of the plans which had been laid, not to corrupt, but to seduce him.

When the Duke of Vicenza presented to Alexander the pretended instructions of B——r, the Emperor said:

"M. de Caulaincourt, I will not read them. I have long since been acquainted with every thing that can be known relative to the unfortunate death of the Duke d'Enghien. The Duke of Baden is my brother-in-law; his court is, in some degree, a portion of mine. You may, therefore, be certain that I know the truth of all that concerns you. I know your innocence. I affirm this on my word of honour, and I hope that pledge will be received."

So saying, he smiled and presented his hand to the Duke of Vicenza. From that moment, M. de Caulaincourt was devoted to the Emperor Alexander. The latter was too adroit, and it may be said, too generous, to render by halves, the justice which he had promised should be complete. What he had said in his cabinet, he repeated publicly in his court; and from that moment, the affair of the Duke d'Enghien was never alluded to, except for the purpose of affirming the innocence of M. de Caulaincourt.

When the French minister for foreign affairs addressed to the Duke of Vicenza a very urgent note relative to the assembling of the Russian

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troops, a petulant answer was returned, and these words were used: " I shall make no further reply to enquiries which appear to me to be absurd."

Such was the course pursued by our ambassador, when levies of troops were being made in every part of Russia;—when the cabinet of St. Petersburg was arranging the bases of a treaty with the Divan; —when Sweden solicited and obtained the promise of Norway for her treason;—when, in short, every thing was flagrant and positive.

In spite of his prepossession in favour of M. de Caulaincourt, Napoleon saw that though his principles were correct, his policy was not so; or rather, it was so far incorrect, as to render it advisable to appoint another ambassador to take his place. M. de Lauriston was therefore sent to Petersburg to supersede him.

Lauriston had received special orders from Napoleon to obtain an immediate audience of the Emperor Alexander, and to bring him to an explanation on the subject of the army. The audience was granted.

" Monsieur de Lauriston," said Alexander, " I am much vexed to observe that seeds of discord are sown between the Emperor Napoleon and me; they can produce nothing but evil fruit. It is strange that I should be suspected of intentions so perverse as those which are attributed to me in France. I, assemble an army, Sir! Where is it? Eighty-thousand men cannot be assembled in secret. If you will have the goodness to appoint officers who will serve as guides to mine, they

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shall go together to reconoitre this army, which is said to be entering upon my territory, without my knowledge, without the knowledge of my subjects. You must confess the thing is absurd!"

Lauriston was greatly perplexed on leaving the cabinet of the Emperor Alexander, and he wrote a most strange letter to France. He, too, was under the influence of a sort of fascination. The tone of irony, mingled with the positive confidence of the denial, left no room for doubt. But this delusion was not of long duration; Napoleon had received positive information respecting the assembling of the troops; but it was not until some time afterwards that he was made acquainted with the treaty between Russia and Turkey.

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CHAPTER XIV.

The Abbé Fournier's sermon—His imprisonment at Charenton—Petitions in his behalf—His removal to Mantua—Cardinal Fesch solicits his liberation—He is appointed almoner to the Emperor—Created Bishop of Montpellier—The Pope—The Kingdom of Haiti—Coronation of Christophe—St. Domingo—Dessalines—State of Europe—Our allies—Junot sent to Milan—Bernadotte—He sells himself for a province—He rejects Napoleon's overtures of reconciliation—Victories in Spain—Taking of Valencia—Suchet created Duke de Albufera—The Emperor's departure for Germany—My visit to Aix in Savoy The Empress Josephine—The Emperor's interview with Francis II—War between Great Britain and the United States of America—The Emperor proclaims war with Russia—Removal of the Spanish royal family to Rome—Josephine's altered appearance—Her exquisite taste in dress—Madame Mère—Her feelings towards Maria Louisa—The Vicomte d'Arlincourt.

I FIND among my papers an amusing story, which I will relate in the present chapter, because its *dénouement* occurred precisely at the date at which I have now arrived.

A report was made to the prefect of police respecting a sermon, having a revolutionary tendency,

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which was preached on Christmas evening at St. Germain l'Auxerrois. It was delivered by a young priest of considerable talent, and it made a great sensation. The Emperor was angry, and ordered rigorous measures to be adopted against the offender. Accordingly the young priest, (the Abbé Fournier) was arrested the same day, and sent to Charenton ; for it was pretended he was a lunatic.

No sooner was the abbé arrested, than all his friends, and they were numerous, raised their voices in his behalf, and the Emperor was assailed by petitions. In short, the arrest of the Abbé Fournier seemed to excite greater indignation than would probably have been felt at the persecution of the whole clergy. A deputation waited on the prefect of police.

" Gentlemen," said the prefect in reply, " what was to be done? Can it be tolerated that insurrection should be preached at the very gates of the Tuileries ? But perhaps you are displeased that the abbé has been sent to Charenton ? Would you rather that he had been sent to a court of assizes ? In the latter case he would infallibly have been condemned (for he is guilty) and shot; a sort of death which would not have been very suitable to an abbé."

" Sir," replied an enthusiastic priest, " the Abbé Fournier would then have died for his God and for his King. He would have died a martyr, and his death would have been glorious !"

" Very true, Sir," resumed the prefect ; " but

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do you not think that the abbé is much better pleased at escaping with the reputation of a lunatic? We will hold him in safe custody for a few months, and keep him on low diet; and when he is a little recovered, he shall be set at large."

The Abbé Fournier remained several months at Charenton, during which time the Emperor was continually annoyed by applications for his release. As it was not judged advisable to let him out of prison, he was sent to Mantua, where he was placed under the surveillance of the superior of a convent. Some years after this, when Cardinal Fesch was going to Rome, he requested the Emperor to grant him a trifling favour. The Emperor smiled, supposing he was going to ask for some picture belonging to the Quirinal or the Villa Borghèse; but no, to his astonishment he requested the liberation of the Abbé Fournier.

"*Ah ça!*" exclaimed Napoleon, "truly the affair of this Abbé Fournier makes more noise than the election of ten deputies. But what do you propose to do with him?"

"Sire," replied the good cardinal, "I only wish that the unfortunate young man should see the green fields and enjoy the light of heaven! As to any mischief he may do, Sire, I will be responsible for him; and you know me well enough to be assured, that the wind will never blow from me to cause your Majesty any annoyance."

"On that condition, then, I grant him his liberty," said the Emperor, "and I hope he will be grateful to you."

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The cardinal on arriving at Mantua, went immediately to the Capuchin convent, released the prisoner, and told him on what condition he had obtained his liberty.

The abbé set out for Rome with Cardinal Fesch, who made him his private secretary; he was subsequently appointed almoner to the Emperor.

He was a young man of considerable talent, and was much more liberal than many of the French clergy of that time, who seemed to be labouring to establish an intolerant despotism, after fifteen years of perfect freedom in the exercise of religious faith. I have often heard the Emperor complain that the French clergy (like those indeed of all countries), would persevere in their endeavours to exercise a direct influence in worldly affairs, and in making the gospel a tool for the establishment of political dogmas. After the concordat of 1805, we were inundated by a crowd of those priests, who having grown old amidst the misfortunes of the church and the state, felt so deeply the grievances that had arisen out of them, that they manifested no indulgence in their holy mission.

But the Abbé Fournier was not one of these, notwithstanding the intemperance of his Christmas night sermon. After his appointment to the situation of grand almoner, he preached frequently, and preached so well, that the Emperor having the see of Montpellier at his disposal, gave it to the Abbé Fournier—the man whom, a few years previously, he had sent to Charenton as a lunatic.

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One day when M. Dubois, the prefect of police, was quietly seated in his cabinet, a servant entered and announced *Monseigneur the Bishop of Montpellier*. Dubois smiled, for he immediately recollected whom the Emperor had nominated to the vacant see.

" Count," said the new prelate, advancing towards him and offering him his hand, " I have come to thank you. You see I act upon that rule of the gospel—the forgiveness of injuries. But pleasantry apart, I have come to express to you my eternal gratitude; for if you had not ordered me to be imprisoned and confined as a lunatic at Charenton, I should not have been sent to Mantua, Cardinal Fesch would not have interested himself for me, I should not have gone to Rome, and I should not now be Bishop of Montpellier, and the most devoted of your servants."

Fournier is now in Languedoc, filling the see of Narbonne, which is, I believe, united to that of Montpellier. It must have been amusing enough to have seen the Bishop thanking the prefect of the police for having ordered him to be confined as a lunatic.

The Pope still remained a prisoner at Savonna. He did not come to reside at Fontainbleau till after the departure of the Emperor. In the meanwhile some curious scenes were passing in another quarter of the world. Henri Christophe was crowned King of Haiti, and a capuchin, named Corneille Brell, anointed him with cocoa-nut oil. In 1804, this same capuchin had anointed the

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Emperor Dessalines. The grand officers of the crown were entitled Duke of Marmalade, Count Lemonade, etc. The constitution of the Kingdom of Haiti was copied from the French constitution of 1804. This parody, on a great empire and a great sovereign, gave birth at the time, to many amusing pleasantries.

The French portion of St. Domingo was, by the new arrangement of affairs, divided into two states on the death of Dessalines, the monster of the Antilles. The mulatoes wished to change the form of the government of St. Domingo, and to establish a republic with an elective president. Christophe was elected president of the republic of Haiti for four years, and Pethion, another mulatto, denounced him. Christophe then placed a crown upon his woolly head, and made toys of sceptres and subjects.

Whilst the pomps and ceremonies of Christophe's coronation occupied the negroes of the Antilles, Europe was threatened with convulsion even to the depths of her gothic foundations. Empires tottered and menaced each other with mutual destruction. France was preparing for the conflict like a victorious warrior. As to Russia, whose hostile intentions could no longer be concealed, she seemed anxious to give the signal for battle. The other powers were still timid, for their yet bleeding wounds reminded them, that Napoleon would severely punish perjury. The Duke de Bassano had spent the whole of the past year in endeavouring to gain auxiliaries.

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Austria, though our ally, seemed unwilling to oppose her brother of Russia. Prussia shewed herself still less favourably disposed, and M. de Krussmarck, who was then at the head of the Prussian cabinet, appeared unwilling to make any concession. Yet nothing was more important than to secure the alliance of Prussia; it was necessary that she should be for us, or be destroyed.

M. de Krussmarck plainly saw that Prussia was lost if France took only a cottage on her frontier. Accordingly on the 24th of February, a treaty offensive and defensive was signed between France and the cabinet of Berlin. With regard to Austria, she was our natural ally, but she was still more our natural enemy. We soon saw the fatal result of that alliance, on which the Emperor so confidently relied. Then Denmark and the confederation of the Rhine; all was for us, when the first trumpet sounded the signal for marching.

Junot had been taking the baths of Bareges, which had greatly improved his health, and he now earnestly solicited the Emperor to give him a military command. Napoleon sent him to Milan to take the command of the troops who were in Italy, and march them to the north. Junot was highly satisfied at this appointment, and left Paris at the moment when the treaty offensive and defensive was about to be signed with Austria. That treaty gave us a subsidy of 30,000 men and 60 pieces of cannon. Prince Schwartzenberg was to command the Austrian troops.

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At the same juncture, Sweden signed a treaty with Russia.—A marshal of France was about to point cannon against his own countrymen,—against his brother in arms,—and against the man of whose glory it had so long been alleged that he was jealous. He sold himself for a province. Norway was promised to Sweden, and immediately Sweden unfurled the standard of war against France. Napoleon made the first advance for a reconciliation with his old brother in arms; but his propositions, though presented through the medium of a friendly hand, and one that the Emperor supposed would be agreeable to King John,* were not accepted. The King of Sweden resolved to lend his aid in pulling down the colossus. This conduct was not very honourable to him. He alleged in his defence that on the 26th of January, General Friant had taken possession of Stralsund, on the part of France, and had entered Swedish Pomerania by order of the Emperor; but he did not acknowledge that for ten months previously, continual conferences had taken place, and that *he*, Bernadotte had rejected every arrangement that was proposed. England, as soon as she learned the defection of Bernadotte, hastened to acknowledge the treaty between Sweden and Russia, by a convention which will prove to posterity, that though Napoleon might have fallen by the effect of his own faults, yet treason and

* The Queen of Sweden remained in Paris, and she undertook the task of transmitting the Emperor's propositions to the King.

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perfidy hurled him into the abyss, on the brink of which he was standing.

Whilst the re-actionary movement was going on in the north, Spain was once more the theatre of our victories. The taking of Valencia by Marshal Suchet was one of our glorious achievements. General Ventura-Caro, the brother of Romana commanded the forces in the garrison. They consisted of eighteen thousand men, nine hundred officers, twenty generals, and four hundred pieces of artillery, together with immense magazines. Valencia was the central depot of all the resources of the east of Spain; it was a brilliant conquest!—The Emperor was well aware of its importance, and by an imperial decree, two hundred millions of francs were assigned to the army of Arragon. It was after the taking of Valencia, that Suchet was created Duke de Albufera.

But as if by way of counterbalance to the laurels which Suchet was reaping in the smiling plains of Valencia, Wellington was victorious in the deserts of Ciudad-Rodrigo and Almeida. He had now re-entered Ciudad-Rodrigo. Shortly after this Badajoz was retaken by the English, and the battle of Tarragona gained by Suchet, was sadly expiated by the loss we sustained at the Arapiles.

At length, Napoleon departed for Germany to give the final orders, and to assemble all the forces which were to march together, he clearly saw that this campaign must be decisive, and that nothing could balance a reverse.

At this time, Paris presented a curious but melancholy spectacle. Husbands, sons, brothers,

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and lovers were departing to join the army, while wives, mothers, sisters, and mistresses either remained at home to weep, or sought amusement in Italy, Switzerland or the various watering places of France. I was then suffering from a severe nervous attack, the result of my fatiguing journey in Spain, and the anxiety occasioned by the health of my son Alfred. I had on a former occasion derived great benefit from the waters of Cauterets, but that place was too far distant. I had been informed that the waters of Aix in Savoy possessed almost the same kind of medicinal properties, and I determined to try them. One day when I was breakfasting at Malmaison with the Empress Josephine, I happened to mention to her my intended journey.

"Oh! go to Aix by all means," said she; "I am going to Milan. On my return to France I shall pass through Aix, and I shall be delighted to meet you."

The Empress Josephine had such a graceful and persuasive manner, that it was always difficult to resist any thing for which she expressed the least wish. I therefore promised her that I would go to Aix, though I was aware that several members of the imperial family were to be there. The fact was, the Princess Pauline, Madame Mère, the Queen of Spain, and the Princess of Sweden, intended to pass the summer at Aix. This was a gay assemblage of visitors for a place, where the most quiet and retired life is the most agreeable!

Before the firing of the first cannon, the Emperor wished to make one more endeavour to ascer-

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tain the definitive resolution of Russia. M. de Narbonne, in spite of all his courtly experience, had not been able to learn any thing in his mission to Wilna. Napoleon entertained greater hope from an interview with the Emperor of Austria, now his father-in-law, and above all, from an interview with M. de Metternich. Napoleon therefore conducted Maria Louisa to Dresden, under the ostensible pretext of paying a visit to her father who was then in that city; but for the real purpose of discovering the path he had to pursue in the labyrinth which he was about to enter.

The wished-for interview, however, served only to raise new difficulties, and these were increased by the certainty of war between the United States and Great Britain. General Bloomfield, whose head quarters were at New-York, declared, on the part of the American Government, war against England. By a curious coincidence, for there could be no previous understanding in the matter, the Emperor declared war against Russia on the very same day, (June 22nd 1812), at his head-quarters of Wilkowsky, near Gumbinen in Eastern Prussia.

At this period a circumstance took place in France, which was but little noticed, because all eyes were directed to the great European Congress;—I allude to the removal of the Spanish Royal Family to Rome from Marseilles, where they had resided since they quitted Bayonne. My brother, who was then lieutenant general of police at Marseilles, and who had the illustrious and

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unfortunate prisoners in some measure under his safe guard and responsibility, was well pleased at their removal, for Charles IV had suffered in health from the sedentary life which he was forced to lead at Marseilles; whilst at Rome he might have the opportunity of renewing his active habits and enjoying his favourite field sports.

The Empress Josephine was a great favourite of the King and Queen of Spain. I have heard from their principal equerry, that she was often the tutelary genius of the unfortunate royal family, particularly when in the Emperor's absence their pecuniary allowances were very tardily paid. She used to exert her influence, and make the requisite applications to get these payments settled.

I did not see the Empress Josephine till some time after my return from Spain. When I arrived in Paris she was at Navarre, which place she was forced to leave in the autumn in consequence of the damp. The Empress had already severely suffered from the humidity of Navarre, the disadvantages of which were only balanced by the beauty of the place during two months of summer, viz: from the end of June to the end of August.

I observed that Josephine had grown very plump since the time of my departure for Spain. This change was at once for the better and the worse. It imparted a more youthful appearance to her face; but her slender and elegant figure, which had been one of her principal attractions,

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had entirely disappeared. She was now decidedly *embonpoint*, and her figure had assumed that matronly air which we find in the statues of Agrippina, Cornelia, Levia, etc. Still, however, she looked uncommonly well, and she wore a dress which became her admirably. It consisted of a robe of fine soft India muslin, delicately wrought with small stars, the centre of each star being of open work. This dress was made in the form of a pelisse, and trimmed entirely round with broad lace of a very rich pattern and set on very full. At equal distances up the front were placed bows of blue satin ribbon. A blue satin slip was worn under the robe. The slip as well as the satin bows were of the purest and richest turquoise blue imaginable. On her head the Empress wore a cap trimmed with lace of the same pattern, but much finer than that which bordered the dress. The lace trimming of the cap was tastefully intermingled with bows of blue ribbon, without the admixture of any flower. Never was there a more simple and elegant dress, and certainly never was any dress more gracefully worn. Josephine's exquisite and judicious taste in dress no doubt contributed to make her appear young much longer than she otherwise would. The Emperor who seldom made remarks on female attire, except when a court dress happened to strike him as having been worn too often, nevertheless frequently admired the elegance of Josephine's costume.

The best proof that can be adduced of the ad-

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mirable taste of Josephine, is the marked absence of elegance displayed by Maria Louisa. Both Empresses employed the same milliners and dressmakers, and Maria Louisa had a large sum allotted for the expenses of her toilette.

I have already mentioned that Madame Mère was very reserved in alluding to the Empress Maria Louisa. She observed the same rule with respect to her second daughter-in-law, as she had observed towards her first; that is to say, she seldom spoke of her, and was always anxious to establish friendly feelings among her numerous children. I may repeat here, what I have said several times before, that Madame Mère is one of the most excellent of women, yet it is nevertheless certain that she was not partial to Maria Louisa.

In her relations with Maria Louisa, Madame Mère admirably maintained the dignity of her own position. During the few first months of her marriage, the new Empress seemed to imagine that the only individuals of the imperial family worthy of her attention, were Napoleon himself and the Queen of Naples: the latter had gone to the frontier to meet her on her entry into France. Madame Mère, whose excellent understanding pointed out to her the impropriety of creating any discord through complaints, which after all must be unavailing, determined to depend on herself alone for securing the respect of her young daughter-in-law. One day Maria Louisa went to visit Napoleon's mother.

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"Madame," said she, "I have come to dine with you.—But I do not come as the Empress—I wish merely to pay a friendly visit to you."

"Mon Dieu!" said Madame drawing Maria Louisa towards her and kissing her forehead, "I shall treat you with no ceremony....I shall receive you as my daughter... and the Emperor's wife shall share the dinner of the Emperor's mother."

The Empress Josephine was less attentive than Maria Louisa to Madame Mère; and in this she was ill-advised. The Emperor did not externally shew his mother much attention, but he was always deeply offended when he heard that any one had slighted her.

A person, who was nevertheless a favourite of the Emperor, well nigh got himself into deep disgrace in an affair in which the popular romance writer Vicomte d'Arlincourt was concerned. M. d'Arlincourt was at that time a very young man, and very much in love with Madame d'Arlincourt, then Mademoiselle Chollet whose father was a senator. M. d'Arlincourt's marriage depended on his procuring a situation in the household of one of the princesses. He was appointed to a vacant post in the household of Madame, though his age rendered the appointment a mark of disrespect. Madame was at first much displeased at this nomination which had been made without consulting her. M. d'Arlincourt was not at that time one of our brightest literary stars:—the *Solitaire* had not then appeared.

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CHAPTER XV.

Madame Mère—The Queen of Spain—The Empress Josephine—Talma and the Princess Pauline—The play at Chambery—*Iphigénie en Tauride*—Droll occurrence—Celebration of my birth-day—A water-party—Princess Pauline's present to me—Description of the Lake of Bourget—The Monastery of Haute-Combe—The Castle of Bonport—The fireworks—A reprimand—My removal to Geneva—The battle of Salamanca—Reported death of Marshal Marmont—Distress of Madame Marmont—The Queen of Spain—Conspiracy against the Empress Josephine—Madame Recamier and Madame de Chevreuse.

I DEPARTED for Aix in Savoy on the 15th June 1812, accompanied by my friend Madame Lallemand, my brother-in-law, and my eldest son,—the latter was then three years of age. Aix was that year exceedingly crowded with company, and it was difficult to obtain houses. I was fortunate enough to obtain a very good house in the principal square. The Queen of Spain resided opposite to me, and was not so well accommodated.

The Queen had but a very limited suite; she seemed anxious to avoid the least appearance of *éclat*. The Empress Josephine, too, had but few attendants. I forget who were the persons who

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accompanied her; but I think Madame d'Audenarde was one of them.

Madame Mère had brought only one lady of honour with her; this was Madame de Fontanges. I offered to resume my attendance upon Madame, though in consequence of my ill health, my services had been dispensed with; but Madame would not hear of this.

Talma was among the visitors to Aix this year. He had gone thither by order of his medical attendants to drink the waters and recover his health; but he seemed likely to grow worse instead of better. He was condemned every evening by the Princess Pauline to read scenes from Molière, to divert the princess and her company. Talma at first, could not venture to refuse a request made by the Emperor's sister. It was certainly very amusing to hear him imitate a female voice and repeat, almost as well as Mademoiselle Mars:

"*Excusez-moi, monsieur, je n'entends pas grec.*"

Then he would assume a gruff tone of voice and growl like the *Avare*. This was all very well for a little time, when Talma himself, tired of playing the emperor, the prince, and the grand-turk seemed to be amused at taking a new line of characters; but he soon grew weary of it.

"This will kill me," said he to me one day. "I cannot hold out much longer; she will compel me to leave Aix, which I am sorry for, because I like the place; but I cannot endure the fatigue of those rehearsals every evening, for the princess is

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learning the part of Agnes in the *Ecole des Femmes;* and that of Angélique, in *Les Femmes savantes.*"

One evening Talma charmed us by the excellent style in which he recited some passages from *Abou-far.* We suggested to him that he might get up a regular performance at Chambery. There was a theatre in that place, and it was possible that he might find a few performers capable of acting with him. He promised to think about the matter, and a few days afterwards he informed us that he had been to Chambery, and made all the necessary arrangements for the play. The piece selected was *Iphigénie en Tauride.* This tragedy required neither scenery, dresses, nor I may say, actors, except in the principal character. The part of Oreste is all. The weight falls directly upon him, and it is he alone who claims the spectators' attention. It may well be supposed every place in the theatre of Chambery was engaged for that evening. After dinner I left Aix, with a party of twenty-five friends.

Talma, I think, played Oreste better than any other of his characters. The part was a favourite with him, and he seemed to concentrate all his talent in it. I scarcely ever failed to go and see him when he performed it in Paris, and I think I never saw him play it better than he did at Chambery, on the occasion here alluded to. During the performance a droll incident occurred.

The actors, who that evening performed at Chambery, rarely had the good fortune to play with such stars as Talma; they would not have

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been very good, even if they had known their parts correctly; but their memory appeared to be sadly deficient. In one scene the cause of this lapse of memory was curious. The actor who represented Pilade, in his profound admiration of Talma forgot his part, the audience, and himself, and folding his arms before him, stood gazing at Talma without ever thinking of the reply he had to make. This, I think, was as creditable to the poor actor as it was complimentary to Talma.

My birth-day, the 10th of August was at hand, and some of my friends at Aix wished to get up a little fête on the occasion. A water party consisting of about twenty was arranged. We were to go by the lake of Bourget, to dine at Bonport, a village a little below Haute-Combe. During the watering season at Aix, it is customary for parties to go to Bonport to dine on *lavarets*, a fish which is found only in the lake of Bourget.

On the morning of my birth-day, I sent my son with his nurse to call on the Princess Pauline. He was a very fine boy, and was a great favourite of the princess; he was also very fond of her, and used to call her his *femme princesse*.

"Why do you love me, Napoleon?" said she to him one day.

"Because you are pretty," replied the child, throwing his little white arms round her neck.

This naïve reply pleased the princess to the very heart; and in truth, her beauty must have been of a captivating kind to have made so strong an impression on the child. When he called upon

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her on the morning of the 10th of August, she feasted him, according to custom, with *bonbons* and then gave him a large bouquet of flowers, saying:

"Take this to your mother, and tell her it comes from the oldest and best friend she has in Aix. Tell her also to take care of the string which ties the bouquet."

My son's nurse delivered the princess's message to me. After I had admired the bouquet, which was composed of the most choice flowers selected from the garden of an amateur botanist, near Chambery, I untied it and discovered that the flowers were bound up by a chain composed of very small pearls, interspersed by brilliant oriental rubies. It was a unique and beautiful *bijou*. But much as I admired it, I was still more pleased by the kind words :

"*Tell your mother it is from the oldest and best friend she has in Aix.*"

Our aquatic excursion to Bonport was delightful. In the whole course of my travels, I have never seen a spot which pleased me more than the banks of the lake of Bourget.

The lake forms a sort of ellipsis, three leagues and a half long and about one broad. It is encircled by the mountain l'Epine, at the foot of which Haute-Combe is situated. On the north of the lake its blue waters bathe a rock called *le Roc de Châtillon* which rises like the guardian of the valley of Chantagne. On the summit of this rock are the ruins of a tower, whose destruction is not the work of age; but of the year 1793.

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Towards the south, the hills of Tresserve and St. Innocent present a beautiful prospect. In that direction the picturesque aspect of the lake is most remarkable, especially during morning and evening in the few months of summer. At that time one of the two hills is in shadow, whilst the other receives a brilliant light: this contrast is singularly beautiful. The lake of Bourget was formerly called the lake of Chatillon. It received its present name from the castle of Bourget, belonging to the house of Savoy, but which is now a heap of ruins.

The ancient monastery of Haute-Combe, forms a conspicuous ornament in the beautiful scene. I frequently visited it while I was at Aix, and always with renewed pleasure.

The castle of Bonport is at the foot of Tresserve, on the bank of the lake of Bourget. It stands on a sort of esplanade, washed by the waters of the lake. This castle is very ancient. It once belonged to the Dukes of Nemours, who had extensive possessions on the banks of the lake of Bourget. The castle is completely insulated, and appears to be accessible only from the lake. The immense trees which shade the castle, and the dark azure blue of the waters of the lake, encrease the gloomy effect of the solitude, and render this one of the most romantic spots in the neighbourhood of Aix. In the evening after we had dined we were standing on the bank of the lake, admiring the picturesque scene around us, when a surprise which my friends had prepared for me, gave to the picture a novel and extraordinary aspect. As I was gazing on the

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landscape by the false light of the moon, I suddenly saw the calm surface of the lake glittering, as it were, by the reflection of millions of stars. On looking upward I beheld the hills of the Epine and the rock of Chatillon illuminated by splendid fireworks. I cannot describe the effect produced by the rockets as they rose above the dark brown mountains and pointed rocks, and then gradually flew like swarms of fire flies, to the rich meadows surrounding Haute-Combe. The light was occasionally sufficiently brilliant to enable us to discern the masses of creeping plants and flowers which grew in the crevices of the old walls of the monastery.

That evening was one of the most delightful I ever enjoyed, and I was far from suspecting that it was to become the subject of a sort of reprimand. Such nevertheless was the case. The display of fireworks had been seen at Aix; and some individuals who were not of our party, had, it would appear, taken offence at our presuming to make merry without them.

Next day I went to pay my respects to Madame Mère. She received me very kindly, as she invariably did; but she told me with a singular sort of manner, that it would be well if I cautioned my friends to be more guarded in their conduct; and that I should not have permitted them to let off fireworks in a place where the Imperial family was residing.

I was stupified, and knew not what reply to make. I was certain that Madame Mère could not voluntarily and without the influence of others,

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have taken offence at an affair which was in no way calculated to wound her dignity, as mother of the Emperor. I immediately guessed the quarter whence the unpleasant impression had emanated. It was a lady. I could have named her; but respect for Madame closed my mouth. My only answer was, that I greatly regretted Madame should have felt offended at the fireworks; that I had no idea she would have been displeased at them, and that besides, my friends had not warned me of their intention. The fireworks were meant as a surprise; and such they really were.

Previously to my departure from Paris, I had promised the Duchess de Ragusa that I would meet her at Geneva, and it was arranged that we should then make a little journey together. Our intention was to go to Schinznack. I received a letter from her informing me that she should be at Geneva on the 25th August, and that I should find her at Dejean's hotel at Secheron.

Madame Lallemand was to accompany me, and having a vacant seat in my calèche, I offered it to my friend Madame Doumerc, who gladly accepted it. We started for Geneva on the 23rd of August, in order to be in time for the festival of the lake.

This festival was succeeded by a number of private balls and parties given by the wealthy residents of the town. Geneva was then very full of travellers, and these parties were consequently very gay. One evening I was at a ball given by M. Saladin at his country house. I felt a depression of spirits which I could not by any effort overcome. If there be any truth in presentiments

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I certainly had one that evening. I was at that time very fond of dancing, and yet I could not for the world have stood up to take part in a quadrille; I perceived some of the gentlemen form themselves into groupes, and I heard them mention Spain.... King Joseph....Marmont. I accosted two gentlemen of my acquaintance who were conversing together very earnestly. I enquired what had happened. One was about to tell me, but the other made a sign, and after some evasive answers they withdrew. At that moment Madame Lallemand stepped up to me, and asked me whether I knew what had occurred. I trembled lest it should be bad news from the north. At that moment my brother-in-law returned. I had sent him to learn what was the matter. He was with M. Perregaux. The latter looked as pale as death.

"There has been a disastrous affair in Spain," said my brother-in-law, "Marshal Marmont is dangerously wounded," then whispering in my ear, he added, "it is said that he is killed."

"Ah!" exclaimed I, "how this will distress Junot!"

Junot and Marmont had been old college companions, and they were as much attached to each other as if they had been brothers. Never had the least shade of jealousy or ill feeling arisen between them. When, therefore, I heard of his death, I immediately thought of Junot. And poor Madame Marmont, who was expected that evening at the ball! How was this sad news to be broken to her? all these thoughts crowded on my

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mind, and I felt myself so agitated that I was obliged to return home.

Madame Marmont was happy, even in the midst of her affliction, in possessing so many friends who felt and shared her grief. At that time I loved her as dearly as my own sister. The news was a terrible shock to her, in spite of all the pains we took to mitigate its severity. Various reports were in circulation. It was said that the Marshal was killed; and as his wound was not a matter of doubt, it was not impossible that death might have ensued. Yet even death was not the calamity most to be dreaded amidst the various reports then circulated at Geneva; but which as far as possible, I kept from the knowledge of Madame Marmont.

The famous battle of the Arapiles, (or Salamanca), fought between Marmont and Lord Wellington was one of the most severe misfortunes that assailed us during the whole course of the Spanish war. This battle was disastrous to all parties; for the English commander stated his loss to amount to five thousand men. Our loss was said to be eight thousand killed and wounded, and six thousand prisoners, and all our artillery.

When private letters began to arrive we learned new misfortunes. Almost all our superior officers had been either wounded or killed. It was absolute carnage. But the most important circumstance in the balance of the Emperor's destiny, was that this battle was a fatal blow to the cause of King Joseph. All who were acquainted with the affairs of Spain at that time knew very well that the

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Cortes were determined to make their submission to Joseph had we gained, instead of lost, the battle of Salamanca.

Madame Marmont, of course, thought no more of her tour in Switzerland. She immediately prepared to depart for Bayonne. She made no capitulation with herself to avoid a long and fatiguing journey, and one which presented nothing very satisfactory in perspective; for even then, the marshal and she were not on very good terms. She left Geneva overwhelmed with distress, and suffering not only from her present misfortune; but from her anticipations of the future.

The Queen of Spain was overwhelmed with grief at the loss of the battle. I had the honour to see her on my return from Geneva; she was inconsolable. The queen was a woman of rare qualities, and of a mild and amiable disposition.

The Empress Josephine arrived at Aix before I left, and I had the honour to dine with her in company with Madame Lallemand and my son. At that time there was a conspiracy formed to oblige her to quit France. An endeavour was made to induce me to join this conspiracy; but I would not listen to any suggestion of the kind, but quitted Aix on the 28th September to return to France. There, symptoms of disquietude had begun to pervade the public mind. Intelligence of brilliant successes was transmitted from Russia, but then the tenor of the private letters was more encouraging.

At this disastrous period women frequently en-

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joyed the horrors of persecution. Madame Recamier, a lady to whom I was attached by many ties of affection, was then living in exile at Lyons, the place of her birth, but no longer her country; for one's country is the place to which we have become attached by habit, and in which our affections are centered.

Madame Recamier had been exiled for having paid a visit to Madame de Staël at Coppet. The cause of her exile was too honourable for a woman like Madame Recamier, no less celebrated for the goodness of her heart than for her ravishing beauty, to endeavour to shrink at the consequences of her devoted friendship. She repaired to Coppet, notwithstanding the warnings given her by Junot and many other friends. She had scarcely reached her destination, when she received notice that the gates of Paris were closed against her. On the departure of Madame de Staël, Madame Recamier left Switzerland, and proceeded to Lyons for the sake of being a little nearer Paris. Her companion in misfortune was another lady who had excited the Emperor's displeasure; but who was the less entitled to sympathy, because her object was merely to gain popularity. This was Madame de Chevreuse. In her case, her mother-in-law was the true heroine; the conduct of the Duchess of Luynes was admirable in every point of view.

As soon as I arrived at Lyons, I proceeded to the Hotel de l'Europe, for I was aware that Madame Recamier lodged there. I was desirous of

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being as much with her as possible, during my stay at Lyons ; and indeed my journey thither had been undertaken chiefly for the purpose of seeing her.

I cannot describe the painful nature of my feelings on entering a vast chamber, parted into two divisions by a skreen. This was the only apartment occupied by Madame Recamier! She whom I had seen in her magnificent hotel, in the rue de Mont-Blanc, surrounded by all the luxuries that wealth could procure, was now residing in an apartment at an inn, looking as beautiful, as cheerful and as graceful as ever. On that very day I vowed an attachment to her, which has never been shaken, and which will endure as long as life itself.

She employed herself in acts of benevolence, and received the visits of a few faithful friends, who occasionally left Paris to spend some weeks with her. Among these friends were M. Adrien de Montmorency, the present Duke de Laval, Matthieu de Montmorency, Benjamin Constant, M. de Catelan and a host of others.

Madame Recamier, when I entered, was sitting at her embroidery frame.

" Are you not dull?" said I as I looked round her solitary abode.

" Dull?" replied she in her soft tone of voice. " I do not know how I should be so. I have various occupations to engage me ; but sometimes, indeed, my unfortunate fate presents itself to my mind. Then I feel myself solitary and I weep; for I will not boast of a stoicism I do not possess. I cannot be happy away from France!"

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All this she said with so natural an air, and looked so lovely, that I could not help turning to Madame Alexander Doumerc to ascertain what impression it had made on her. The looks we exchanged were expressive of profound admiration at the sight of adversity supported with so much courage.

Madame Recamier had in the apartment a piano forte, drawing materials, work-frames, books, etc. These alternately occupied her time; but could not entirely exclude melancholy recollections.

Madame Doumerc ran her fingers over the keys of the piano forte, and produced those sweet tones which she so well knew how to draw from the instrument.

"Ah!" exclaimed Madame Recamier; "revive some of the recollections I share in common with you both! sing me a song; but let it be French, not Italian!"

Madame Doumerc requested me to accompany her in one of Boieldieu's romances, the words to which were written by M. de Longchamps, when he was banished to America by the Directory. They are expressive of the deepest melancholy, and I could perceive they drew tears from the eyes of the fair exile.

We spent four hours at Lyons with Madame Recamier. I was delighted at fulfilling this duty I owed to friendship, and I was persuaded that Junot would thank me for my attention. He was the most devoted friend of that excellent woman. He possessed a heart capable of appreciating her high qualities.

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I parted from Madame Recamier with regret. I could have wished to have stayed longer with her, but I could not. I was anxious to return to Paris to see my children again. My two daughters I had placed at the Abbaye aux Bois before I left Paris, as I could not safely leave them at my hotel in the care of their English governess, who was too young for such a charge.

I found my family all well. I wrote to Junot to inform him of this; for he loved his children as tenderly as I did. He had been a good and dutiful son; most attentive to his aged mother. A bad son will never make a good father. He wrote to me from Mojaisk when he learned my departure from Aix.

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CHAPTER XVI.

Mrs. Spencer Smith—The Marquis de Salvo—The Countess Attems—The Theatre St. Samuel—Marshal Lauriston—Invitation from the Director of the Police—M. de la Garde—Order for Mrs. Smith's removal from Venice—The Marquis de Salvo proposes to aid her escape—She declines his offer—Is prevailed on to accept it—Her two children sent to Gratz—Mrs. Smith departs from Milan accompanied by the Marquis de Salvo—Arrival at Verona—A midnight rendez-vous—The prudent friend—Brescia—A new scheme—The rope ladder—The phial of laudanum—The Lake of Guardia.

Before I come to the conspiracy of General Malet, I will relate a story which may appropriately be placed next to those of Madame Recamier and Madame de Chevreuse. I allude to the astonishing adventure of Mrs. Spencer Smith, the sister-in-law of the brave and chivalrous Admiral Sir Sidney Smith.

In the year 1806 it was difficult to find, over the whole continent of Europe, a single corner which afforded shelter against the despotism of the Emperor, when it was his pleasure to exercise it. Italy was in his power, Germany almost subjugated, and even as far as

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the steppes of Russia, there was no place which could be said to secure a refuge for the proscribed. Venice was no longer the beautiful and voluptuous city, where the only condition imposed upon her inhabitants, was to be happy. French domination extended even to the lion of Saint Mark. The "Code Napoleon" punished the gondolier of the Brenta, and prohibited him from singing his barcaroles.

There was at this period a vast number of foreigners in Venice. The Marquis de Salvo, a Sicilian nobleman, then only twenty years of age, had quitted Sicily and Naples, and was travelling in other parts of Italy.

The Marquis was even at this early period of his life distinguished for his talents and knowledge of the world, and he was most cordially received by all the foreigners of rank, then in Italy. Of this number was the Countess Attems, the daughter of Baron Herbert, Internuncio from Austria to Constantinople. The countess was a most amiable woman, and her house was the resort of the best company in Venice.

A younger sister of the countess had arrived a short time previously from Germany, for the purpose of recovering her health. This lady was Mrs. Spencer Smith, whose husband was the ambassador from England to Stuttgard. Mrs. Smith seldom quitted her apartment, but those who knew her declared that she was distinguished for grace and beauty; that her mental attainments were of a very superior kind, that she spoke seven languages with perfect

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purity, was an excellent musician, and was familiar with the literature of every language she spoke. All that the Marquis de Salvo heard respecting this young lady rendered him extremely desirous to become acquainted with her.

"I wish much that you would introduce me to her," said he to the Countess Attems; "pray do me this favour."

The Countess Attems promised that she would; but her sister was almost always ill, and never could be prevailed on to appear in the salon of the Countess. One day, however, Madame Attems wrote to the Marquis the following note, accompanied by the key of her box at the theatre San Samuel:

"There is to be a new piece to-night by the Chevalier Guarini,—go, and I will present you to my sister—she will be there."

The Marquis would have put off any ten invitations to have accepted this. Accordingly, before the appointed hour he was seated in the box of the Countess Attems, who on her arrival was accompanied by a young lady, whose delicate and elegant figure, fair and transparent complexion, light hair, and graceful deportment rendered her, in the eyes of the marquis, one of the most beautiful creatures he had ever beheld. Her remarks on the performance evinced a penetration, and a tact which led the Marquis de Salvo to observe, "that she was as conversant with the Italian language as any of the best educated Florentines.

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" I claim no merit for that," replied she, " because I am passionately fond of Italian literature."

The marquis retired delighted with the evening he had spent, and happy in the hope of improving his acquaintance with so charming a person. When he followed her into private life,—when he saw her as the mother of a family engaged in superintending the education of her two sons, Sidney and Edward,—then the marquis joined to this admiration, a feeling of veneration and profound respect which nothing could eradicate.

Shortly after the Marquis de Salvo's introduction to Mrs. Smith, General Lauriston, one of Napoleon's aides-de-camp arrived in Venice, to exercise the functions of governor. Monsieur de la Garde then filled the post of director general of the police. One night the Marquis de Salvo went to pay a visit to the Countess Attems,—he found her drawing-room deserted. Astonished at this solitude, he enquired the cause of it, and was informed that Monsieur de la Garde had that evening sent an *invitation* to Mrs. Spencer Smith, requesting her to *call on him next morning at his office*. This form of proceeding, so little in accordance with the usual habits of Monsieur de la Garde, whose politeness of manners is well known,—alarmed the friends of Mrs. Spencer Smith. The effect of this invitation, which Mrs. Smith in her frankness had thoughtlessly made known, was a signal for

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every one to desert her, as a person whose society it was almost dangerous to frequent, since she had come under the attention of the director general of the police of Venice. The Marquis de Salvo was exasperated at this desertion of Mrs. Smith. He was then young, and he possessed a mind attuned to every noble and generous feeling. He offered to escort Mrs. Smith the following morning to the office of Monsieur de la Garde. She accepted the offer with thankfulness, and the next day at eleven o'clock he was before the palace of the Countess Attems, with his gondolier, to conduct the lady to her mysterious and annoying interview. The director general of the police received Mrs. Spencer Smith with every mark of respect and attention. He perceived she was greatly alarmed, and endeavoured to persuade her, that the business was nothing of a serious nature. "Do not regard this affair with too much anxiety," said he; "I am convinced that it has originated in some mistake. You need only be prudent. Perhaps you see too much company at the house of your sister. It is necessary that I should lull the suspicions which your name may have excited in Paris, by the assurance of a great reserve in your conduct. If you will be guided by me, I would suggest the propriety of your quitting Venice. This is a maritime city; there are many foreigners here. I think you had better reside in some other part of Italy.—Hire a house near Padua. Your sister

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can go to visit you there, and all this will be much for the better." Mrs. Smith, delighted to find that this dreaded interview had terminated thus happily, assured M. de la Garde that within three days she would follow his advice. Having taken leave of him, she proceeded to console her sister, who awaited her return with impatience.

On the following evening, as the family were grouped around Mrs. Smith and the marquis, whilst they were singing barcaroles, to which the mariners of the Lido responded, a great uproar was heard on the staircase of the palace. This was caused by four gendarmes and a brigadier at their head, who communicated to Mrs. Smith that she must be a prisoner in her own apartment, and that they were desired to guard her there. On hearing this order, not only discourteous as applied to a female, but barbarous in its execution, and revolting under all its forms, the family of the Countess Attems were panic struck. The fair prisoner evinced an extraordinary share of courage at this trying juncture, and supported the fortitude of her sister. Though she felt anxiety for herself, still she appeared to have no other fear than that of being a source of inquietude to Count Attems and her sister. As to the Marquis de Salvo, he left the palace of Madame Attems in deep distress of mind. Early on the following morning he waited on M. de la Garde, to enquire the cause of the severe measure adopted against Mrs. Spencer Smith. He

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became very uneasy, on observing that M. de la Garde's manner was different from what it had been on the preceding day.

He was embarrassed, and appeared desirous of concealing some unpleasant secret. At length, however, he determined to speak out, for his silence tended in some degree to involve him in the odium of this affair.

" I must inform you," said he to the Marquis de Salvo, " that yesterday, after I had spoken to you and Mrs. Spencer Smith, a courier brought me fresh instructions—not from the Viceroy, not from the minister—but from the cabinet of the Emperor himself. These orders are severe. Doubtless the Emperor has the most urgent motives for acting thus, and in truth....."

" In the name of heaven what are the orders you have received ?" exclaimed the marquis in evident alarm. M. de la Garde hesitated for a moment, and then proceeded in an under tone :

" The order which I have received, and which is also addressed to General Lauriston, bears a formal injunction to remove Mrs. Spencer Smith from the city of Venice, with a strong escort of gendarmes, and to conduct her to Milan. She is to be first interrogated there by his Imperial Highness the Viceroy, and afterwards conveyed to France, where it is probable she will be imprisoned in the citadel of Valenciennes." The marquis here uttered an exclamation. " Silence," continued M. de la Garde, " for otherwise you

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will but endanger yourself without benefiting the lady. I have told you thus much because you are a friend of the family, and to enable you to communicate the intelligence to them, mitigated by the sympathy of friendship. Mrs. Spencer Smith must depart hence in six or seven days. She may travel as slowly as her health requires. Be assured it is painful to me to have to execute this mission; but you must be aware that my duty must be my first consideration."

"But what reason can be adduced for this?" exclaimed the Marquis de Salvo.

"I know not," resumed M. de la Garde; "nevertheless," added he, "I believe I may tell you, that the name of Smith is probably one cause of the severity which is shewn towards this lady. You know she is the sister-in-law of Sir Sidney Smith, of St. Jean d'Acre, and the wife of Mr. Spencer Smith, the ambassador from England to Stuttgard. Recollect the affair of Drake, and you will then have a key to circumstances which appear mysterious."

The Marquis de Salvo left the director-general distressed at the fate of Mrs. Smith. The state of his feelings would not permit him, at that moment, to call on the Countess Attems. He found his way to the Lido, and endeavoured by exercise and reflection to calm his agitation. He formed many plans, but they were all undetermined and vague.

Since he had became acquainted with Mrs.

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Smith, he had discovered that she possessed a degree of strength of mind equal to her talents. But she was in a feeble state of health ; and how could she be expected to bear the violent shock of learning that she—a young female of three and twenty years of age, up to that moment happy, surrounded by the attentions and the homage of all who knew her—she, Mrs. Spencer Smith, was a state criminal, threatened with a captivity not only severe, but perhaps eternal ! The marquis shuddered at the thought of raising even a corner of that veil, which concealed from the unfortunate lady so terrible a perspective. Nevertheless he resolved upon fulfilling his task.

" Doubtless, Madam," said he to Mrs. Smith, " you are placed in a situation of great difficulty ; but I will save you. Do not give way to grief. I will attend you on your journey, and even though I should perish, I will secure your escape."

Mrs. Smith raised her eyes to the marquis, whose handsome countenance was animated by an expression accordant with his ardent feelings.

" I cannot accept your generous offer," said she, with a grateful emotion which she did not attempt to conceal. " Renounce your project, and leave me to my fate. I am innocent, and Heaven will protect me."

" No," resumed the marquis in a determined tone, " I am resolved to save you, and I will attempt it. I repeat, that I will stake my life in the enterprize."

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" Well," said Mrs. Smith, " return hither in a short time, and I will then shew you a letter which you must read with attention, and I think you will be satisfied after having read it, that you ought not to accompany me."

The marquis took his leave, and returned within an hour. A letter was delivered to him from Mrs. Smith, which he carried to the Café de Venice, to read without interruption. It was as follows :

" I cannot accept the offer of your generous devotion, and I will candidly disclose to you my reasons for declining it. You are young ;—you have discovered in me some agreeable qualities, which may possibly appear magnified by the unfortunate position in which I am placed, its singularity, and my desolate condition. You perhaps entertain towards me an exalted sentiment which would lead you to undertake anything noble and generous ; but this sentiment has its birth only in the ardent and impassioned imagination of a young man of twenty. Relinquish, I beseech you, this wild project. Think of yourself, think of your parents. Look to your fortune,—for your property is in Sicily. The man who pursues me, will speedily lay his iron hands on your estates. You will be ruined, even admitting that your life should be saved, which is doubtful. Give me not cause for remorse in the tears of your mother. Raise not on my account an insurmountable barrier between yourself and your country ; for my

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gratitude, great as it would certainly be, can never make you amends for these sacrifices."

On perusing this letter, the young marquis was deeply moved. Hitherto, no feeling foreign to the purest generosity had mingled with his wish to serve Mrs. Smith. Had she even been old and ugly, he would have been ready to aid her as an innocent and unprotected woman. He felt deeply hurt at the doubt which she had expressed. In his reply to her, he protested, upon the honour of a gentleman, that no unworthy thought had for a moment mingled with the offer of his protection.

" Have I not a motive for protecting you in this moment of affliction?" said he. " You know my attachment to the royal family of Sicily. Is it not gratifying to me to lend my aid to the sister-in-law of the man, who is at this very moment protecting my unfortunate sovereigns. Your noble relative, Sir Sidney Smith, Madam, ought however to have familiarised you with the acts of disinterested devotion. Let me, by saving you from unjust persecution, shew my gratitude to England, the country which has done so much for my sovereigns. As to my fate, there is nothing to be apprehended. Heaven will protect the good cause; and if providence should ordain otherwise, you need feel no remorse for the tears of my mother. I know her well enough to be assured that she would feel no regret if her son should perish in accomplishing the mission of a man of honour. Once more, Madam, be assured

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that all will be well. With regard to the sentiment by which you suppose I am actuated, you must pardon me when I assure you, that however much I may admire you, I entertain for you no other affection than that of a brother. Accept then my most sacred word of honour, that as soon as you shall be placed in safety, and restored to your family and your children, I will leave you without asking to pass another hour near you. I make this solemn pledge to you and to your sister. Spurn not the services of a sincere friend, and allow me to save you."

The lady was much affected by this letter which certainly bore the tone of truth and sincerity. The Countess Attems overruled her sister's scruples, and the marquis at length received permission to make arrangements for the execution of his project.

He possessed great courage and coolness. One of his first steps was to secure the safety of the two sons of Mrs. Smith, Edward and Sidney. These two children, although the one was only seven and the other five years of age, might have been retained as hostages after the escape of their mother. It was then about the 15th of April. That season of the year is most delightful in Venice, and Mrs. Spencer Smith's children went frequently to be rowed in the gondolas. One day the marquis accompanied them to Fasina. Having reached that place he said to their tutor:—" Here are one hundred louis, take a post chaise, get into it with your two pupils, and proceed as speed-

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ily as possible to the Countess of Strassoldo's at Gratz in Styria. Remain there until Mrs. Smith shall again join her children. Depart without delay." The tutor, an honest German who was devoted to his patrons, obeyed the marquis and fulfilled his commission.

On his return to Venice, the marquis advised Mrs. Smith to write to the principal authorities, stating that she did not consider it safe to undertake so long a journey with no companion but her female servant, and requesting permission for a friend of her family to accompany her:—that friend being the Marquis de Salvo. In answer to Mrs. Smith's letter, General Lauriston replied: "That he was most happy to find his instructions did not oppose his ready acquiescence in her demand." The Marquis de Salvo accordingly renewed permission to accompany Mrs. Smith. On the 25th of April 1806, Mrs. Spencer Smith quitted Venice for Milan, escorted by four gendarmes, and a brigadier named Amédée. This latter rode in the carriage of the prisoner, together with the marquis and Louise, the waiting woman. The marquis was the more confirmed in his determination to secure Mrs. Smith's escape, since he well knew that she must otherwise be imprisoned in the citadel of Valenciennes. The Emperor's displeasure had been excited against her in consequence of Drake's affair. Her husband had happily for him, reached England; but Napoleon had received intelligence, either true or false, which represented that his wife was on the

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continent, as the agent of her husband. Her extraordinary talents, and the number of languages which she spoke with facility, added to her beauty which was in itself a powerful fascinator —all tended to confirm the Emperor's suspicions, and prompted him to adopt measures so extremely severe towards a female. The Marquis de Salvo reasonably feared that the lady's captivity would be rendered most rigorous,—and these apprehensions having been confirmed by something which he heard prior to leaving Venice, he renewed most emphatically to the Count and Countess Attems the solemn assurance that he would save their sister. They departed in a gondola of the Lagunes. The carriage was to be in readiness for them at Padua.

General Lauriston and the director general of the police, in consideration of Mrs. Smith's state of health, had authorised the gendarmes to stop in the fortified towns, when the prisoner should request them to do so, and even to halt for several days if required.

It was at Verona that the marquis counted on carrying into effect his plan of escape. There was in that city a friend of his childhood whom he loved as a brother, and upon whom he believed he could implicitly rely. This friend was Count Leonardo Grimani. The marquis had directed the countess in English, to say that she was fatigued and required rest. On alighting from the carriage, the Marquis de Salvo hastened to the hotel of Count Grimani. It was closed!—

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He learned from the porter at the gate, that the Count was in the country, more than three leagues distant. The marquis was much disappointed. His first obstacle in the way of his project appeared to him to augur badly.—He immediately wrote a letter to Count Grimani in which he said: "An affair, in which my life and my honour are engaged, compels me to appeal to your friendship. I have need of your assistance; but it is necessary to keep this a profound secret; and since you are not in Verona, it is also requisite that our interview should not be known. Come here to-night. At one o'clock,—you will find me in the Arena.*—I shall be under the seventh arch on the left, and by clapping your hands you must give me notice of your arrival."

With that warmth of feeling which is so natural to youth, and which is always accompanied by confidence in others, the marquis sought from his friend only that which he himself would readily have offered him, had he required it. Never doubting that the count would make his appearance, though the postillion whom he had sent with the letter had not returned, the marquis retired to his chamber, which he had purposely chosen on the ground floor.

When he was certain that the inmates of the house were asleep, he softly opened his window, and having wrapt his cloak well round him he repaired to the Arena. The weather was stormy;

* The Grand Circus at Verona.

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and the moon, which was then in her first quarter, gave only a weak and unsteady light. The marquis hastened to the place of rendez-vous, he reached the seventh arch on the left, as the clock of San Domino struck one. But no one was there!—Profound silence prevailed. The marquis clapped his hands,—but received no signal in reply. It was evident that no one was there. He awaited the arrival of his friend with an anguish which it would be difficult to pourtray. But time was flying on; and no footstep broke the melancholy silence which pervaded the Arena. It rained, and the wind forcing its way under the long vaults, seemed to the marquis like the howling of purgatory. At length the clock struck four. The darkness of the night now began to diminish. A broad streak upon the horizon announced the dawn of day. The marquis, in despair, returned home. In passing the post-house, he stopped to enquire for his postillion, who he found had arrived. He had brought the answer of Count Grimani, who had discovered by the incoherent style of the marquis's letter, that the affair in which he requested his assistance, might possibly compromise him. He did not deem it prudent to serve his friend at the risk of his own safety. The Marquis de Salvo angrily tore in pieces the letter of Grimani. "And this is what is called a friend!" cried he burning with indignation.

Next morning, at breakfast, the marquis had to inform Mrs. Smith that the hopes of that night

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had been thwarted. She endeavoured to calm him. But he was not only mortified by the failure of his hopes: he was disappointed in his friendship; a wound which his young and ardent mind felt most sensibly. They stayed at Verona, till the following morning. Then the little caravan took the road to Brescia, where it arrived on the 1st of May 1806.

I have now to communicate the details of a most extraordinary romance, and one which is the more interesting, inasmuch as every fact recorded in it, is strictly true, and satisfactorily authenticated.

The refusal of Count Grimani was the more vexatious, as there remained for the fugitives no asylum to elude pursuit, allowing that they could steal away from the gendarmes. This circumstance above all others increased the difficulties; for it was in the chateau of Count Grimani that the marquis reckoned upon concealing Mrs. Smith. Suddenly, however, a thought crossed his mind: The lake of Guarda occurred to him with its shady banks, and above all its boats—those boats which had so often, during the preceding year, conveyed him to parties of pleasure at Riva. A few moments sufficed for him to arrange every thing in his mind; and he communicated his plan to Mrs. Smith in English. On arriving at Brescia, he endeavoured to obtain lodgings which might be favorable to the execution of his project. He wished to obtain apartments on a ground floor; but in this he did not succeed,

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and he was obliged to content himself with a very inferior lodging, at the Due Torre inn. It was on the first floor.

When Mrs. Smith had retired to her chamber, the marquis sent for Amédée, the chief of the four gendarmes. He was an honest fellow and always found of a joke, especially if a woman was mixed up in the matter.

"My dear Amédée," said the marquis, "I cannot tell you how much I repent the step I have taken in thus accompanying Mrs. Spencer Smith. We shall soon be at Milan—I shall find myself in the presence of Prince Eugène! Judge of the awkward situation in which I am placed. He has rendered me very great services; and I owe him many obligations. What will he think when he finds me escorting a prisoner of state? I am alarmed for my property in Naples. In fact, I am alarmed for myself. In short, Amédée, I believe the best thing I can do, is to separate here from Mrs. Smith. I will join her again, but it must be beyond Milan."

"I have long wished to speak to you on this subject," answered Amédée with an air of importance. "After all, what can you do for the poor lady? We will take care of her: I do not say," continued he with a horse-laugh, "that we shall be as useful to her as you. But at least, she will be safe, and with this assurance you may depart."

"Yes," said the marquis, "but I cannot tell her this myself. Do me the favour to inform her, my dear Amédée, that I am going to make pre-

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parations for my departure. On my return, I should wish to bid her farewell; but without a witness; you understand."

"Perfectly," said the gendarme, winking his eye. "You may take your farewel without interruption."

The marquis immediately procured a horse, rode to Salons, and hired two boats. One of these boats was for himself and Mrs. Smith, the other was to convey the post chaise which was also ordered with the horses. These arrangements occupied nearly three hours. On the other bank of the lake were the passages of the Tyrol, Saltzbourg, and the frontier of Styria.

The marquis returned to Brescia, made several purchases, wrote a long letter explaining all to Mrs. Smith, and then went to her. Amédée kept his word, she was alone though still guarded. The marquis could say but little, for the day was advancing. The poor captive trembled and wept. The marquis trembled too on seeing the height of the windows. At length they separated after some final instructions given by the marquis, the most important of which was, that Mrs. Smith should fasten a cord to her window at nine o'clock that night, for the purpose of drawing up a packet and a rope-ladder.

The marquis employed the rest of the day in preparing this ladder. He was far from expert at this task, but determination surmounts difficulties. Before evening he had completed a ladder of ten or twelve feet long, and sufficiently strong to bear the

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fugitive. At nine at night, he repaired to a little narrow obscure passage, opposite to the inn of the Due Torre. From thence he saw a light in Mrs. Smith's apartments. The window on the left belonged to the chamber adjoining her own, and which the gendarmes never quitted. Her own window was softly opened when the nearest clock struck nine, and the marquis saw the cord descend. He approached with caution, but it was scarcely necessary, the street being deserted by that hour, and the weather was bad. The marquis tied a packet to the cord and it was quickly drawn again. He then returned to his hiding place. This was a barn, in which was the cabriolet and the horse, which he had hired for forty-eight hours. The barn was close to the gate, through which they must pass to go to Salons. The marquis threw himself upon the straw to endeavour to sleep, for he foresaw that, if he was not shot the following morning, he must remain many days without rest. The packet which he had carried to Mrs. Smith contained a suit of boy's clothes, the rope-ladder, the letter explaining every thing she would have to do, and a phial, in which were five and twenty drops of laudanum. The laudanum was intended as a narcotic potion for the waiting woman, if she should decline to aid the flight of her mistress. The hour appointed for Mrs. Smith's escape was eleven. The anxiety which the marquis suffered during the interval from nine o'clock till eleven, it is impossible to describe. At length the clock struck half past ten, and the marquis ventured

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from his retreat. He had on a large military cloak, and a three cornered hat, and he walked with the greatest confidence in order to avoid suspicion.

On reaching the narrow lane opposite the inn of the Due Torre, which had already served to conceal him, he trembled, and fancied for a moment that all was discovered. The window next to that of Mrs. Smith, which belonged to the room occupied by the gendarmes, was open, and no light appeared. Was this done the better to surprise them? He was overwhelmed at the thought of being wrecked so near to port. At this instant eleven o'clock struck from all the churches of Brescia. The marquis then saw a light glimmer through the white curtains of Mrs. Smith's window. The sash was raised, and the lady appeared in the balcony dressed in male attire. Louise threw a packet to the marquis, and then lowered a casket which contained Mrs. Smith's jewels. All this was done in profound silence. At length came the moment which the marquis dreaded. Mrs. Smith, after a short prayer, got over the balcony, and placing her feet on the ladder began to descend, but the unsteadiness of the ladder, the height of the window, the danger to which she was exposed, — all made such an impression upon her, that she felt her senses failing. Shutting her eyes, whilst at the same time she clung with all her strength to the ladder, she exclaimed in an under tone to the marquis:

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"I am lost, I can neither descend nor go up again!"

"Courage, madam, and all will be well. See how well every thing has succeeded thus far. Try to descend a few more steps. Fear nothing, throw yourself down and I will catch you." The lady hesitated, footsteps were heard in the street. "We are undone," exclaimed the marquis, "we are lost if you do not instantly follow my advice. Some one approaches."

Agitated by the dread of falling, and the fear of being discovered, Mrs. Smith let go her hold of the ladder, and dropped into the arms of the marquis, who fell to the ground with her, but without sustaining any hurt. Whilst they were both recovering themselves, two men passed singing on the other side of the street, without even noticing them. In a few moments the fugitives reached the barn in safety.

"Oh!" exclaimed the unfortunate lady, as she threw herself upon the straw, "what a night of horror. If you knew all!" In uttering these words, she appeared to shudder at some terrible recollection.

"Compose yourself," said the marquis. "I conjure you, in the name of your children, of your mother, of your sisters. Do not create any obstacle to the success of an enterprise which has proved thus far so fortunate!"

Mrs. Smith wept. "Oh, poor Louise! if you knew how nobly she has acted. She at first

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wished to follow me, but afterwards, when she saw that was impossible, she told me that lest she should make any answers which might lead to a discovery of my track, she had drunk the laudanum. "This," said she, "will make me sleep, and will prevent my saying a single word which may endanger you. And before I could prevent her," continued Mrs. Smith, "she had swallowed the whole contents of the little phial. I am alarmed for the consequences."

After they reached the barn, the marquis recollected that he had left the rope ladder at the window of the inn. He hoped that Louise had removed it before break of day; but after what he had just heard, he thought it was not likely she could have done so, and the first person passing by, might give the alarm. He ran to the inn of the Due Torre; but the ladder was gone from the window. After looking about, he found that it had been cut, and was lying on the ground below the window. Louise had returned to the balcony to see if her mistress was out of danger, and perceiving the ladder, she immediately understood all that was to be done.

On his return, the marquis found Mrs. Smith more calm, and more mistress of herself. She remarked that it was nearly three o'clock.

"Shall we depart?" said she.

"How can we?" said the marquis. "Brescia is a closed town. We cannot get out before the opening of the gates. But, stay! A thought strikes me!"

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He took from the cabriolet a blue cloth cap with a gold band and tassel, and having put it on his head, he handed the lady into the cabriolet. Mrs. Smith, it will be recollected, was in male attire. He seated himself by her side wrapped up in his cloak, and the cabriolet was in a few moments at the gate of the city.

" Hollo ! how is this ?" exclaimed the marquis with an oath. " What ! the guard of the gates not at his post ! I will cashier him !"

The man appeared, half undressed, with the keys in his hands. " Who is there ?" cried he, in an affrighted tone.

" The colonel of the third regiment," answered the marquis, assuming a gruff tone of voice. You received notice last evening that I was going into the country to-day. I will break you."

" Colonel, I assure you that I knew nothing of the matter."

" Go and open the gates, and do not stand babbling there." The guard opened the gates, holding his cap in his hand, and having again closed them, he returned to bed, whilst the fugitives drove rapidly to Salons.

On arriving there they entered their boat, and took the direction of Riva. They now breathed again, and were able to render thanks to Heaven for the success of their attempt. Day was dawning, and the first rays of morning sparkled on the surface of the lake, whose limpid waters and luxuriant banks presented a picture of unusual beauty. The lake of Guardia is more picturesque

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than either the lake Maggiore, or the lake of Como It is one of those remarkable spots which are always visited by travellers in Italy. Mrs. Smith had not before seen it, and she admired it with the enthusiasm of an elevated mind and a poetic imagination. They landed at Riva.

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CHAPTER XVII.

Arrival at Trent—The commissary of police—The fugitives saved by an inn-keeper—Concealment in a thicket—The solitary farm house—The casket of jewels—New danger—Escape—Berthold Scalden—The Trent journal—The hermitage—The military at hand—The frontier of Styria—The barrier—The princess and the bookseller's clerk—The fair lady and the dark gentleman—Disguises—St. Maria—The cavalry officer—The ball at Inspruck—Salzbourg—The Marquis de Salvo's imprisonment—His liberation—He proceeds to Russia—Embarks for England—The Marquis de Salvo receives the congratulations of Queen Charlotte.

But new disasters awaited the fugitives. In order to obtain fresh horses at Trent, it was necessary that Mrs. Smith's passport should be shewn. That of the marquis bore his real description, but it contained the word *Cameriere*, which he had altered to *Cameriera*, Mrs. Smith having resumed her female attire; the officer would probably have let them pass, but it happened to be the commissary of police who examined the passport. Pro-

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bably out of humour at being roused from his bed, he discovered that the passport was almost a false one. However, as he must have a more careful examination of the parties, and as by not giving the order for the horses which were required, he was very certain to find them again on the following morning, he postponed until eight o'clock the further examination of the passport, and returned to bed.

" There is no time for hesitation," said the marquis, " we must proceed on foot ; otherwise we are lost."

Mrs. Smith was overcome with fatigue ; but on seeing the imminent danger in which she stood, she determined to follow the advice of the marquis. He had observed the countenance of the master of the inn ; he appeared to be a kind-hearted man. He went to him and made some enquiries about the road they were to take. The worthy man looked at the travellers with interest and pity. A thought which might naturally occur under such circumstances, perhaps at that moment crossed his mind.

" It is impossible that the young lady can undertake the journey on foot in the middle of the night," he observed. " You are not here under any *surveillance*," added he ; " and if you will give me your word of honour that you have committed no offence against the government of my country, I will sell you a cabriolet. I can also spare you a horse, which will very well bear a long journey. Depart then, and may heaven protect you."

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He himself put the horse to the vehicle, and mounted it himself in order to answer his name to the guard at the gates. In this manner they passed without difficulty. It was two o'clock in the morning when they left Trent. The good landlord of the inn, delighted at having saved them, left them at a distance of one league from the city. Mrs. Smith did not complain; but at every jolt of the vehicle, the marquis saw pain depicted in her countenance. Towards the morning, she found herself so weak, that she implored the marquis to drive at a slow pace; but he did not think it safe to do so. At intervals they heard at a distance an indistinct sound like the rolling of a carriage, and the smacking of a whip. This sound proceeded from the direction of Trent. At length, it came so near upon them that Mrs. Smith became greatly terrified.

They were then at the top of a very deep valley, at the foot of which flowed a little river, or rather a torrent. On the other side was a steep and well wooded mountain. The marquis did not hesitate, he saw at some distance behind them a calèche full of men in uniform. Were they then pursued? This was probable, if not certain. From the position of the two carriages, the marquis could clearly distinguish every thing, whilst the sun shone in the eyes of those who approached, so that they could not perceive him. "Do not be alarmed," said he to Mrs. Smith, and taking the horse by the bridle, he led him down rapidly to the bottom of the valley, and

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having urged the animal across the little torrent, he entered a thicket formed by the young trees which grew at the foot of the mountain. He penetrated it with some difficulty, and then imparted to Mrs. Smith the reason for the course he had adopted. "Heavens!" exclaimed she, clasping her hands "why, should I thus struggle to save a miserable existence.—Why not have waited for them! What have I to hope for?—I cannot always escape. The whole of Europe is under the dominion of that man, and I must submit to my fate. Monsieur de Salvo, let us return to Milan—you will leave me at the entrance to the city, and you can afterwards go to some other part of Italy."

The marquis represented to her that, of all expedients, the worst was that which she had just suggested. The flight had commenced fortunately, and its termination might be equally happy. "Think above all, of your children, of your mother, of your husband. It is your duty to preserve yourself for their sakes."

At that moment the rolling of the carriages was heard on the heights. The noise was at first loud, then it became more distant, and at last it ceased altogether. Mrs. Smith again clasped her hands and offered thanks to God. "Let us go on," said she; "Providence has ordained that I shall escape them! But how are we to get out of this thicket?" Truly it was no easy matter: the marquis sallied forth to reconnoitre. On his return, he said: "I have

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found a footpath, it may almost be called a road. The carriage can pass through it; we must take this way, for it is advisable we should avoid the towns and high roads."

He then explained to Mrs. Smith that his object was to gain the frontier of Styria, by passing along the border of the territory of Salzbourg. The trial which they had made of their passport at Trent was not calculated to give them confidence on passing through the cities. It was necessary then to proceed by bye roads, and above all things to guard against being met and recognised. The escape had been known for three days past. A description had been circulated of their persons, and the situation of the fugitives was in every respect more perilous than it had been before their flight from Brescia. Mrs. Smith was aware of this, and she gave renewed proofs of that fortitude of mind which she had evinced throughout her misfortunes. She suffered much from fatigue, but one might say of her:—

In corpo debile, anima forte!

She ascended the mountain on foot. When they had reached the summit, they perceived with delight a solitary house which appeared to be a farm. The heat was excessive, and the unfortunate lady had nothing to quench her thirst but a little water, so heated by the sun, that it was scarcely drinkable. They arrived at length before the door of the house. It was closed,

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and the barking of two or three dogs was at first the only answer they could obtain. At length, a window above the door was opened, and a young woman asked them in no very gentle tone what they wanted.

"We wish to rest here for a little time, and to have, upon paying for it, some milk, and something to eat."

"This house is not an inn," replied the woman. "And how did you find your way here? The road by which you have come is known only to my husband, and some of the inhabitants of the other valley." And saying this, the young woman cast a glance of curiosity and distrust at the two fugitives.

"I am the professor of botany at the University of Pavia," answered the marquis. "My wife accompanies me always in my journies. This has been a longer one than usual, and we have lost our way. But open the door, and give us something to eat,—you shall not repent it."

The woman was prevailed on to let them in; she shewed Mrs. Smith into a parlour well furnished, the refreshing coolness of which restored her failing strength. Whilst she washed the dust from her hands and face, the young woman served up dinner. They had just finished their repast, when a man presented himself at the door. He was armed, as is necessary to be in those solitary mountains. His countenance was unprepossessing, and an expression of dissatisfaction, which he could scarcely conceal on perceiving the two

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strangers, alarmed Mrs. Smith. The young woman explained to her that the persons he saw, were their guests. He divested himself of his arms, that is to say his sabre and his pistols, retaining on his person a long poniard. While he paced sulkily up and down the apartment, he suddenly cast his eye on the little casket of jewels which Mrs. Smith always carried about with her; it contained diamonds of great value. By a sudden movement, which it was impossible to prevent, he took up the casket which was closed by a small golden key then in the lock. He opened it, and the jewels sparkled before the astonished eyes of the man and his wife.

"Ah! ah!" he exclaimed, "then I am not deceived.—Your timid manner—your appearance in a place which can only serve as a retreat from justice,—all made me suspect you to be adventurers. But this is a more serious matter, —you are thieves! and possibly," added he, "you may be murderers!"

Mrs. Smith fell back in her chair, and uttered a shriek, the distressing tone of which went to the heart of the young woman. She flew to her aid, and gave her a little water.

"You are not common travellers," continued the husband. "It is my duty to arrest you, young man, and to go to the neighbouring town to find assistance to conduct you to the prison of Trent."

He advanced towards the marquis, whose pistols were in the cabriolet, and who now trembled on

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thinking of the consequences which might result from being conveyed under such suspicious circumstances to Trent, whence he had fled on the preceding night.

" Hear me," said he to the man, drawing him aside, " take care of what you are doing." And with ready invention, fabricating a story, he told him that they were emigrants, that the jewels were his wife's property, and concluded by offering him twenty piastres to allow them to depart.

" If you would give me forty, I would not," answered the man. " It is plain that you are eluding justice. Come, go before me," pursued he, at the same time taking one of his pistols. "Obey, or I will shoot you."

The marquis refused to move, and the man was about to take him by the arm to force him forward, when his wife threw herself at his feet, supplicating him to allow the strangers to depart. The tears of Mrs. Smith had moved her, and she was under the influence of that powerful spell which the beautiful outlaw exercised over all who saw her, and conversed with her. The woman interceded so urgently in their behalf, that at length her husband's pity was moved, and he himself put the horse to, with which they were to resume their journey. It was already late; but in spite of all the offers and entreaties of Mrs. Smith, he refused to allow them to pass the night in his house.

" Begone!" he said. "All I can do for you

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is to let you depart. May heaven pardon me if you are guilty !"

The marquis and Mrs. Smith resumed their journey ; it was then quite dark. They travelled on until nearly day-light amongst the mountains, and in the morning found themselves near a fortified farm, of which there were many at that period in the Tyrol. At this farm they breakfasted. They then again set out on their melancholy and dangerous pilgrimage.

They bent their course towards Berthold-Scalden, which is a watering place. It was necessary to avoid passing through the town. The marquis was slightly acquainted with the suburbs of Berthold-Scalden, and drove towards the lake of Zell. They arrived at a small inn situated on the margin of the lake. The master of the inn was a great news-monger, and had a variety of journals upon his table. Eager to see if any description had been given of them, the marquis seized the first which lay before him. It happened to be a Trent paper. He read under the head Milan that the police of Trent declared Mrs. Spencer Smith and the Marquis de Salvo to be fugitives, and authorised any of the inhabitants of the kingdom of Italy to arrest them, if they should be discovered, and to send them under a safe escort to Milan, where the marquis would be brought to trial for having favoured the escape of a prisoner of state of the French Empire. Unwilling to alarm Mrs. Smith by explaining to her the new

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danger that had arisen, he merely informed her that they must immediately depart.

"We shall turn Berthold-Scalden," said he, "and probably reach the frontier of Styria to-night."

At this moment the sound of military music was heard. The marquis advanced to the window, and beheld in a little meadow near the house several squadrons of cavalry. On enquiring of the landlord of the inn, he learned that they were troops that had been about a week in Berthold-Scalden, and that they occasionally came to do their exercise on the banks of the lake. The marquis knew a great many officers in the Bavarian, as well as in the French regiments He was obliged to renounce all idea of passing these troops;—a fatality seemed to pursue the unfortunate fugitives.

"What is to be done?" ejaculated Mrs. Smith, weeping. "I will deliver myself up, and do you save yourself in the Tyrol: a man may easily escape."

The marquis's countenance shewed that this new proposition to abandon her was almost offensive, and Mrs. Smith held out her hand, at the same time asking his pardon for having wounded his feelings. The unfortunate lady knew nothing of the Trent journal, which the marquis had thrown into the fire.

"We must cross the lake," said he, "and find refuge in the neighbouring mountains. Courage, I beg of you, and all will be well again."

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But at that moment, he himself had not much hope.

They crossed the lake, and steered their boat towards the hermitage. The marquis's plan was to solicit an asylum of the clergyman, which he knew he could grant without peril to himself. This was their only alternative. They passed two days in the chapel, which was situated in the midst of a wood of fir trees, and but little frequented by the inhabitants of Berthold-Scalden. In the evening of the second day, they heard the sound of military instruments. As soon as the sun had gone down, the marquis crossed the lake to obtain some information. The regiments had continued their march towards Salzbourg, and the fugitives could now proceed. They determined to depart immediately, and cautioned by the advice of the hermit, they avoided Berthold-Scalden by going round it. Next day they passed through Rastadt, a large town, in which they stopped to dine. They were then not more than two leagues from the frontier of Styria.

"At length we are safe!" ejaculated the marquis.

Alas! they were now less safe than ever. They cheerfully resumed their route, after having dined, and reached without difficulty an interior barrier which opened on the road to Styria. They confidently presented their passport. The guard read it, then began to laugh, ran to his desk, took out another paper, compared them together, and again laughed very heartily. When

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people laugh, there is generally nothing alarming; nevertheless the fugitives enquired the reason of this hilarity, and the man, still laughing, presented to them the paper which he had compared with the passport, and on reading it they commenced laughing as heartily as he did. The marquis thought they were mistifying him. At length he learned the truth, which was sufficiently amusing.

The young Princess de F....g had fallen in love with a bookseller's clerk at Vienna. This feeling of tenderness was mutual, and the two lovers had fled in order to escape from the power of the lady's family, and from the imperial authority, which is always exercised to punish unequal matches of this kind. The Austrian government had sent a description of the two fugitives to all the large cities of Germany, France, and Italy, accompanied by an order to the chief authorities to transmit the description of the two individuals to all the places through which they were likely to pass.

The guard of the barrier of Styria had received this description in common with others. It represented the young lady to be fair, and the young man dark. This circumstance had excited his risibility; for he thought it droll that they should have come so unsuspecting to deliver themselves up; especially the young man, who had reason to apprehend severe chastisement. Mrs. Smith, shewing to the guard the two descriptions, explained to him that the fair and the dark

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complexions were the only points of resemblance between the fugitives and themselves, who were unoffensive travellers. The man was convinced of the truth of what she said, but nevertheless would not take upon himself the responsibility of letting them go.

" Hark ye," said he, " Saltzbourg is not far off, go thither—get your passport examined there, and then you shall pass. But you must be aware that a passport from Venice, which has not been examined at any place, since it was given, looks a little suspicious."

The man was certainly right.

" We are lost," said Mrs. Smith, " difficulties seem to multiply. I have no longer any hope! What is to be done?"

" A very simple thing," replied the marquis. " This is the season when the flocks quit their winter for their summer pastures. They go in large flocks. We must disguise ourselves as shepherds. We will leave the cabriolet and the horse, and set off in the middle of the night with one of these flocks of sheeps. The shepherds will not know, but that we are of their party.

" Heavens," exclaimed Mrs. Smith with the feelings natural to an elegant and refined woman, " how do you imagine I could put on the filthy cast off clothes of those miserable shepherds. —I should prefer the prison of Valenciennes to that." The marquis however insisted upon returning to Rastadt to purchase their disguises. They arrived there at sunset, and they

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had to depart again at midnight in order to meet the flocks at the moment of their passing, which was generally at break of day. The marquis, who undertook the office of making up the story, told the hostess, that wishing to surprise his sister, whom they were going to meet, his wife and he wished to dress themselves as shepherds. He requested her to purchase the two costumes, and gave her several pieces of gold. The good hostess speedily executed the commission. By one of those unlucky chances, which happen but too often to the unfortunate, the man of whom the dresses were purchased was attached to the police of the little town of St. Maria, two leagues from thence. He questioned the woman: she told the truth, and that truth was sufficient to warrant the arrest of a whole town. He said nothing, but sold her the two dresses. Scarcely had she turned her back, when he saddled his horse, and hastened to St. Maria to give information of what had occurred.

The disguises were put on amidst bursts of laughter. The fair fugitive enjoyed one of those moments of quiet, which frequently, it is said, precede misfortunes. At midnight, having liberally rewarded their good hostess, they were about to step into the cabriolet to drive to the Styrian frontier; but as they were passing through an obscure corridor which led from the parlour to the court yard, the marquis felt the points of two bayonets touch his sides, whilst Mrs. Smith was rudely seized by two soldiers, and dragged back to the

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parlour. There a commissary of police was seated. He eyed the lady for a long time with an air of insolence.

"What is your name?" he at length enquired.

"Mrs. Spencer Smith, the daughter of Baron Herbert, the Internuncio from Austria to Constantinople, and the wife of the ambassador from England to Stuttgard."

Mrs. Smith immediately perceived that she could only serve herself and her companion by avowing the truth. She was now upon the Austrian territory. The government might not be sufficiently strong to save her; but the subalterns might be overawed by her tone of authority, and let her go. In fact, the commissary seemed for a moment overwhelmed by this litany of great names, though he looked as if he did not believe she was telling truth.

"And why this costume?"

"Because I choose to wear it. That is a matter which does not concern you!"

"Humph! and where are you going?"

"To the residence of my sister, the Countess Strassoldo, at Gratz in Styria."

"Who is this man who accompanies you?"

"My valet-de-chambre."

"I cannot come to any decision in your case," said the commissary. "You must accompany me to St. Maria."

All this time the marquis was under guard in an adjoining chamber. But he had heard the questions and answers, and that was sufficient for

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his guidance in his examination. Next morning they all departed for St. Maria. Mrs. Smith in a carriage, and the marquis on foot between two soldiers.

St. Maria is a very small garrison town of the Tyrol. On arriving there, the commissary related the affair to a superior officer who was commandant of the town, whose first impression was, that this female was an adventurer; he went to Mrs. Smith and interrogated her himself.

It happened that during the preceding year, Mrs. Smith had been at Inspruck with her husband. They had given a ball, the room was small, and they were obliged to refuse many applications. I mention this fact, that the reader may be the better enabled to understand what follows.

The officer questioned Mrs. Smith with that politeness which a man naturally shows to a pretty and engaging woman, but he seemed to change his tone when she described herself to be Mrs. Spencer Smith.

"You assume a respectable name, madam," said he, "and this imposture may bring you into trouble. You are not Mrs. Spencer Smith. Tell me the truth, and perhaps I may serve you."

Mrs. Smith was very short-sighted. She therefore had not at first remarked the officer's countenance; but by degrees, it struck her that she had seen him before, and she was speedily assured of the fact.

"And am I not Mrs. Spencer Smith, Sir?" said she with a smile. "Have you then so treacherous a

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memory? Can you have forgotten, Sir, that when Mr. Spencer Smith, the English ambassador at Stuttgard, came last year to Inspruck, his wife, who was with him, gave a ball, to which many officers were invited? Several of them could not get admittance, in consequence of the smallness of the apartments; and one of these gentlemen, Baron de .... yourself, Sir, came recommended by a lady of Inspruck, his relative. Through that recommendation he obtained a preference over many of his friends."

"Madam! madam," exclaimed the baron, dropping on his knee before Mrs. Smith and kissing her hand; for he now recognised the graceful form, and beautiful face of the enchantress who had given so many delightful parties at Inspruck, "Madam, can you pardon me! I am a most unfortunate man! Deign then to be as kind as you are amiable and beautiful, or I am lost."

Mrs. Smith raised him, and laughing, assured him that every thing was forgotten.—"But," said she, "I am very anxious to reach my sister's, and the day is advancing. I hope I shall be permitted to continue my journey," added she smiling.

"I should like," exclaimed the baron, "to see any one prevent you. I am now your champion."

He went to the commissary of police to whom he certified, upon his word of honour, that this lady was Mrs. Spencer Smith.

"Indeed!" said the commissary "so much the worse for her, I have just been reading the Trent

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Gazette, which my secretary has handed to me. Read this paragraph."

The baron here read the paragraph which the marquis had seen at the inn on the lake of Zell. He knew not what to do. France had then such long arms, that she could reach her victims wheresoever they might fly.

"We must not compromise ourselves in this affair," said the commissary of police; "I must send the lady and her valet-de-chambre to Saltzbourg. But it is needless to make enemies anywhere; therefore you had better conduct her thither, as a mark of respect."

"Not I," said the baron. "I will not play the part of gendarme to so lovely and amiable a woman."

"Would you wish her to have four soldiers and a corporal for her escort?"

"Certainly not."

"It must be you or they, there is no choice. I will inform her that we cannot take upon ourselves the responsibility of allowing her to proceed."

They departed for Saltzbourg, which by the recent treaty of Presbourg, belonged to Austria. The marquis mounted the box along with the coachman, and during the journey, which lasted a day and a half, he waited at table as expertly as if he had been accustomed to the duties of a valet. On arriving at Saltzbourg the prisoner, for such she still was, was conducted to the principal inn in the town, and the baron went to apprize

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the authorities of Mrs. Smith's arrival, having first placed two sentinels at her door.

The director general of the police at Saltzbourg was a shrewd, clever man. He probably thought it ridiculous that a woman should be charged with political offences, and though very polite, he threw a little sarcasm into his interrogatory.

"Who is the man who accompanies you, madam?"

"My valet-de-chambre."

"His name?"

"Francesco Raimondo."

"How long has he been with you?"

"Three months."

The director general left the apartment making a very low bow.

The marquis was guarded in one of the chambers of the house. He was conducted to the hotel of the police, where an interrogatory was commenced, which threatened to prove dangerous to him. This he well knew, but he was upheld by a noble and generous feeling, which under such circumstances is a great support. The room in which the director general and himself were, looked out upon the Saar, which runs at the foot of the castle and surrounds the town of Saltzbourg. On the opposite side were beautiful hills, clothed with the most delightful vegetation. The marquis having answered the questions put to him looked out upon the prospect, and exclaimed: "What a beautiful country! it is almost as fine as Italy!"

The director smiled. He asked no questions;

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but he rang a bell, when a tall thin old man entered, who by his bunch of keys might be recognised as a jailor. The marquis was consigned to his safeguard, and in a few moments he was in a chamber, or rather a cabinet, ten feet long by seven feet wide, under the castle at two hundred feet below the ground. They brought him some soup, bread, and water, and then left him to enjoy himself at his ease. Towards evening a man entered into his prison, and said to him in latin. "Your mistress is saved, my friend; she has departed for Lintz."

"Is it true?" exclaimed the marquis. "Heaven be praised!"

"Truly," said the man smiling at the facility with which the prisoner understood his latin, "you are a very attached, very devoted servant; but for yourself, who will save you, my friend?"

"God," answered the marquis, making an allusion to the motto of his house*.

"He is doubtless a good protector; but we are ourselves frequently the arbiters of our destiny. You would do well to speak the truth."

The marquis made no reply.—Some moments after he was ordered to descend to the cabinet of the director. "Do you know the marquis de Salvo?" he enquired abruptly.

"Certainly. I know him well. He is my master," said the marquis, without appearing disconcerted.

* *In Deo Salus.* The devise of the Salvo family, and the origin of their name.

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" Why did you leave him?"

" By his order, to follow Mrs. Smith and to endeavour to save her; and my only regret is that I have not entirely succeeded."

" At what town did you leave your master?"

" At Venice." They remained in silence for some time; the director of the police then rang a bell in a peculiar way, as he had done on the first occasion; and immediately a man came in, whose looks were not more propitious than those of his late jailor. He conducted the marquis to another place of confinement which was entered by a low wicket door. The dungeon contained only two seats, and a litter of straw; it had all the appearance of a place whence a prisoner could hope to be released only by death.

For the first time, M. de Salvo felt his fortitude begin to fail him. He stretched himself on the straw litter, and fatigue and anxiety of mind soon threw him into a profound sleep. He had slept for a considerable time when the jailor entered, and respectfully requested him to follow him to the director of the police. The latter, as soon as the marquis entered his cabinet, flew to embrace him.

" My dear marquis," said he, " why did you oblige me to treat you with such severity....This was not fair."

The marquis, fearing that this was a snare laid to entrap him, at first denied that he was himself. But the director shewed him a letter from Mrs.

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Smith, who had arrived at Lintz, where she was to remain until the receipt of Count Stadion's answer, and where the marquis was to join her. Nothing could have happened more luckily, for the marquis had well nigh paid for all, in as much as the police of both Venice and Milan were in pursuit of him. A description of his person had been posted up in all the public thoroughfares, and those who might conceal him were threatened with severe punishment.

He was now liberated, and he immediately set off for Lintz where he joined Mrs. Smith, and after the lapse of two or three weeks the answer arrived from Vienna. It was arranged that Mrs. Smith should assume the name of Muller and embark at one of the northern ports. She immediately left Lintz and proceeded to Gratz, where she joined her sister, Countess Strassoldo.

It will be recollected, that when at Venice Mrs. Smith rejected the offer of the Marquis de Salvo; he assured her of his disinterestedness by promising that as soon as he should have restored her to her family, he would not even ask the reward of spending another hour in her society. As soon as they arrived at Gratz, the marquis hired a post chaise and went to fetch Mrs. Smith's children, Edward and Sydney, who were at some little distance from the town. Presenting the two boys to their mother, he said:

"Here are your children and your sister; you are now safe under the roof of your family. I therefore bid you adieu. I leave you, and I hope

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I have convinced you, that a man of honour is capable of performing a generous action without the hope of a reward."

Mrs. Smith, overpowered by her feelings of gratitude, held out her hand to him. She begged that he would remain in safety under her sister's roof, and not again expose himself to the dangers which he had incurred for her sake. He complied with her request. Shortly afterwards they proceeded to Russia, and embarked at Riga on her return to England.

On his arrival in London, the Marquis de Salvo received the thanks of Mrs. Smith's family; and Queen Charlotte, the consort of George III, publicly expressed her satisfaction of his conduct.

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CHAPTER XVIII.

The Russian campaign—Consequences of the battle of the Moskowa—Kutuzoff—Rostopchin, the incendiary of Moscow—The holy city—Malet's conspiracy—The *tail of Robespierre*—The Duke of Otranto, M. Talleyrand and General Servan, intended consuls of the new republic—Eve Demaillot—Plan for carrying off Napoleon—The Abbé Lafond—Life and character of Malet—His military talent—His republican opinions—His escape from the *maison de santé*—Generals Guidal and Lahorie—M. Frochot—M. Souillier—Arrest of Savary—The *tour de force*—Visit to General Hulin—Malet fires at, and wounds him—Doucet, Laborde and Pasques—Malet arrested—Pasquier and Rovigo reinstated in their posts—The court martial—Sentence of death—Execution.

I HAVE mentioned the fatal credulity of the Duke de Vicenza relative to the troops which the Emperor Alexander was assembling on the Russian frontier. M. de Lauriston was, fortunately, less credulous; but he managed to darken the inextricable labyrinth into which we were about to enter, and only augmented the confusion. Meanwhile the Russian campaign commenced, and the misfortunes of Napoleon obscured his glory, and his happy star.

In 1812 the Emperor Napoleon should have

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acted more prudently than when, less dazzled by fortune, he found himself in 1806 in the presence of the Russians, who were flying from him to avoid a conflict. Then he halted, took up a formidable position on the Vistula, prepared for the approaching campaign, established entrenched camps at Thorn and Praga, as well as bridge heads on the Vistula, the Bug, and the Narew, and finally the battle of Friedland brought about the treaty of Tilsitt. I am aware that in answer to these remarks it may be said, that in 1812 the army had nearly reached Moscow, at a period of the year (7th September) when the cold is not severe; but was it not natural that Moscow, with a population of 400,000 inhabitants, would defend itself?

The victory of the Moskowa gained by the talent and courage of Marshal Ney, proved as disastrous in its consequences as a defeat. What a fearful list of killed and wounded appeared after that battle! The Sythian Kutuzoff, who had the presumption to declare that he had gained the victory, was rewarded by a title rarely given in Russia, that of field marshal. Kutuzoff after all, might reasonably be excused for saying he had conquered an enemy, whose loss was so much more disastrous than his own. The carnage of that day was incalculable. I have been assured that more than one hundred and thirty thousand cannon were fired in the course of the battle. If we were conquerors, it was only for the vain honour of remaining masters of a field of battle, strewed with the bodies of the dead, and saturated with their blood: "That night," said Junot to

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me, " was one of the most horrible I ever passed! —We had no provisions—the cold rain poured incessantly—we had no wood to kindle fires—and groans and cries of agony resounded on every side."

The Russians retired on Moscow. In that capital there happened to be a man, whose mental capabilities had previously been concealed under the mask of a buffoon;—for he had been known under that denomination at the court of Paul I, where he often excited the risibility of the sovereign by his jests and grotesque stories. Rostopchin was a shrewd and intelligent man, and when he set fire to Moscow, he foresaw that the court of St. Petersburg would vote him double thanks. He was well aware that the *Holy City*, as it was called, and which was still the rival of St. Petersburg, was the subject of secret councils and plans which the government dared not venture to put into execution. The Autocrat of all the Russias saw with impatience the first city of the empire resisting his authority, because the old Muscovite boyards, who, since the time of Peter the Great, defended their privileges as their fathers had defended theirs, could not be subdued in their palaces, amidst their numerous slaves. Rostopchin by extending the system of destruction already adopted at the opening of the campaign, was apparently doing nothing more than his duty; but he had a deeper rooted design, and the Russian government, without being in collision with him, was heartily grateful for what he did.

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After M. de Segur's admirable account of the conflagration of Moscow, it would be superfluous in me to enter upon any details of that event: I have received several descriptions of it from my friends, but none comparable to that given by M. de Segur.

We entered Moscow, and in the meantime the Russian army of Friedland landed at Riga. The army of Moldavia gained Brese on the Bug.—This latter force threatened to cut off our communications with Warsaw. We now began to awaken from our dream of good fortune.—That waking was terrible.

In spite of the precautions adopted for preventing the disheartening intelligence from reaching Paris, letters were received. The unauthenticated reports which got into circulation created more anxiety than bulletins which would have candidly told the truth,—they were even more distressing than the first bulletin after the retreat from Moscow! There were at that time in Paris a number of malcontents as there always are. The police had kept a watchful eye upon them; but for a time its vigilance seemed to have abated. In truth, since the retirement of Count Dubois, the police of Paris had been very indifferently conducted. Of this, an event which occurred at the period here alluded to, is an undeniable proof.

In after times, it will scarcely be credited that in Paris a man, by his own unassisted attempt, was on the point of overthrowing the government and establishing a new order of things, neither

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wanted nor sought for; and that that man *himself* placed under arrest the minister and the lieutenant of police. Yet all this really happened on the 23rd of October 1812.

To enable the reader fully to comprehend the extraordinary conspiracy of General Malet, it will be necessary to detail some antecedent circumstances connected with it.

When the Emperor was at the Chateau of Marac in Bayonne in 1808 and 1809, Dubois kept a vigilant watch over the agitators of Paris. Fouché was at that time minister of the police. Suddenly it was announced to the prefect of police (Count Dubois) that a conspiracy was forming, and that it was sufficiently advanced to call for the attention of the government. Some generals of the army of the Rhine were at the head of this conspiracy. These were General Malet, General Lahorie, (formerly aide-de-camp to Moreau), and another equally obscure. There were at that time but very few troops in Paris and its environs. The Spanish war had just commenced, and even the guards were about to march to the Pyrenees. The Emperor, it is well known, always had a great suspicion of what he termed the *tail of Robespierre*, and every public officer, whose duty was to aid in maintaining the tranquillity of Paris, was enjoined to keep a close watch on that portion of the population. Count Dubois, whose business-like intelligence left at an unmeasurable distance all our previous police prefects, very reasonably conjectured that Malet was not really the leader of the affair.

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The republic was to be established with three consuls and three vice-consuls: Who were these *six kings* to be? This was but imperfectly known. It was said that the Duke of Otranto was to be one of the consuls, M. de Talleyrand was to be the second, and the third was General Servan, formerly minister for the war department, and who before the revolution was the Marquis de Servan. The departure of six thousand grenadiers of the old guard, who were ordered to Bayonne, was to be the signal for carrying this plot into execution. Count Dubois discovered the whole affair, and communicated it to the Emperor, together with the names of the conspirators. One of these names had a fatal celebrity. It was Eve Demaillot, who had been Robespierre's secretary. The Emperor ordered that the trial should be deferred until his arrival in Paris; and he erased with his own hand the sentence of condemnation. Yet it is evident that the conspirators intended to take his life; for in this first affair of Malet, the plan was to carry off the Emperor during one of his journeys to Malmaison. It is easy to guess what was meant by *carrying* off Napoleon. He allowed the conspirators to escape with no other punishment than that of being ordered to return to the south of France or Italy.* As to Generals Malet and

* This and the affair of Moreau sufficiently disprove the charge of despotic cruelty, so often urged against Napoleon.

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Lahorie, they were placed in *maisons de santé* as lunatics.

On the evening of the 22nd of October Malet was playing a game at chess with a priest named Lafond, whose political opinions were diametrically the opposite of his ; but this difference was lost sight of in their hostility to a power which was mutually hateful to them. Malet thought he was destined to deliver France, and the priest thought so too. This was the ground of the confidence, or rather the half confidence that subsisted between them. Malet told the Abbé Lafond that on the following morning, he, a poor and obscure prisoner, was about to change the condition of Europe. But he also deceived the priest by telling him that the Emperor was dead. He said that he had received intelligence of the event in the course of that afternoon ; but that the archchancellor would keep the affair secret as long as he could. Malet assured the priest that the senate and the legislative body were convoked for the 25th, and he added, with an air of sincerity, that he believed the object of that convocation was to acknowledge Napoleon II.

" We have therefore no time to lose," said he. " All that is wanted is to let the French nation have a free choice—that it may say, ' I will have this child for my sovereign or I will not.' "

The Abbé Lafond lent ear the more readily to Malet's project, because he considered him to be insane. " Let this madman clear the way,"

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thought he, " even though he should not succeed, he will only be imprisoned for a lunatic."

I will give a brief description of Malet. His life and death are alike extraordinary, and furnish curious materials for history.

Charles François Malet was born in 1754, of a noble family in Dole, Franche-Comté. His family being of what was called the *noblesse d'épée*, he was destined for the military profession. The date of his birth shews that at the time of the conspiracy he was not young. He commenced his military career in the *mousquetaires*, which he entered at the age of sixteen. On the disbandment of that corps, he received a commission of captain of cavalry, and returned to Dole, where he resided until the breaking out of the revolution.

Malet was an ardent supporter of the new order of things, and he was soon appointed to the command of one of the battalions of volunteers, which formed the stem of our fine army. He conducted himself very well, and gave proofs not only of courage, but of military talent ; and when the Emperor restored to favour several *opposing* generals, Malet was one of the number. He had served in the campaign of Italy, under Championnet : he returned thither with Massena, and I think Massena made honourable mention of him in more than one bulletin. He gave him a confidential post—the command of the fortress of Pavia.

But his opinions were more decidedly republi-

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can than the Emperor chose should be professed in the army, and consequently Malet was placed on the list of retired officers. In this retirement he continued till 1809, when he joined the conspiracy of which Servan suggested the first idea. He was arrested. The evidence against him was sufficient to have condemned him to be shot; but Napoleon was merciful, in spite of all the absurd things that have been alleged to the contrary. He never condemned when he could pardon; and consequently Malet was merely confined.

During this confinement he met General Lahorie, formerly chief of Moreau's staff, and General Guidal, who was likewise known for his republican opinions. An intimacy naturally grew up among them, through the two-fold sympathy of sentiment and misfortune. They were then all three at La Force, but Malet was afterwards removed to a *maison de santé*, kept by a man named Dubuisson, in the Rue Charonne, Faubourg St. Antoine.

On the 22nd of October, as I have mentioned above, he was playing at chess with the Abbé Lafond. He appeared very thoughtful, which indeed was natural enough, for his plot was then formed, and was to be carried into execution that same night. As soon as all the inmates of the house had retired to rest, Malet went into the garden, scaled the wall, and found himself at liberty.

He immediately repaired to the colonel of one of the two regiments of the Paris guards, and

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persuaded him that the Emperor had been killed before Moscow on the 7th of October. The colonel, without much consideration, gave credit to the tale. Malet next proceeded to the barracks of the 10th cohorte, where he found Lieutenant Colonel Souillier, to whom he shewed a forged decree of the senate, declaring the dissolution of the empire, and appointing General Malet commandant of Paris. M. Souillier probably lent a willing as well as a ready ear to the story ; for he immediately ordered his men under arms, and went personally to the Hotel-de-Ville, of which he took possession without any resistance. Frochot was in the country. He did not return to town till ten in the morning, when he found preparations were making to revive the provisional government, and poor Frochot readily lent his aid.

Malet having secured the military, liberated Generals Lahorie and Guidal from prison, and allotted to them the parts they were to play. His own was not the most easy. General Guidal was to be prefect of the police, and General Lahorie minister of the police.

Among the faults of Savary, who was then at the head of the police department, indolence or neglect of business could not justly be numbered. He frequently sat up all night writing dispatches to the Emperor, and that very night (22nd of October) he had been writing till morning. He had no sooner lain down, than his *valet-de-chambre* entered his room pale and trembling.

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" Ah, Monseigneur !" said the valet, " you are to be arrested ! "

" Arrested ! what do you mean ?" exclaimed the duke.

" The court-yard is full of soldiers. There is a general officer at their head, and they say they have come to take you, Monseigneur. They are now ascending the great staircase. I ran to tell you, because you perhaps have papers."

The poor valet was almost frightened out of his wits. I saw the duke that same day, and I can aver that, even twelve hours after, the effect of the alarm was visible in his appearance.

On learning that he was to be arrested, the Duke de Rovigo never dreamed that it was by any other order than that of the Emperor. He therefore made no attempt either to defend himself or to escape; but he almost sunk beneath the severity of the shock.—At that moment a violent noise was heard in the adjoining room. There was a knocking at his door, and admittance was demanded in the *name of the law.* The lower panel of the door was broken in, and through that aperture the soldiers entered the bed-chamber of the Duke de Rovigo. When the door opened, the duke beheld before him a man whom at first he might naturally have supposed to be a phantom of his own imagination. This was General Lahorie, who was understood to be locked up in La Force, and who now stood before him sword in hand and in the uniform of a general officer. The

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effect produced upon Rovigo was like that of an electric shock.

"The Emperor is dead," said Lahorie, "and the people are at length going to nominate their own magistrates."

On receiving this intelligence of the death of the Emperor, Savary fell almost in a state of insensibility into a chair which stood near him. He was sincerely attached to Napoleon.

But in proportion as he recovered his presence of mind, he began to suspect that what he had heard was a fabrication, though one that might, nevertheless, be attended with fatal results. The Emperor, it is true, might have died in the retreat from Moscow; but was this the way in which the ministers were to be made acquainted with the event? He told Lahorie that he doubted the truth of what he told him. General Guidal then stepped forward and whispered a few words to General Lahorie. Guidal's countenance had a very sinister expression, and on observing him whisper to Lahorie, the duke said, addressing the latter:—

"Lahorie, you and I have bivouacked together. We have both smelt gunpowder in the same field of battle. I hope you will remember this, and will not suffer your old comrade to be murdered like a dog."

At the word *murder*, Lahorie shuddered; for he was an honest hearted man.

"Who speaks of death?" said he.

"No one; and yet every one around me," re-

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plied the duke, looking at him steadfastly.... "I saved your life," added Rovigo, "in the affair of Moreau. Lahorie, I hope you do not forget that."

Lahorie made no reply; but stepping up to Savary took his hand and pressed it convulsively. Indeed they both seemed to be in a sort of feverish dream. At length the Duke of Rovigo was placed in a hired cabriolet and conveyed to La Force, where, to his great astonishment, he found M. Pasquier. The latter was as much in the dark as the minister of police, as to the origin of this strange adventure. One of the drollest incidents of this affair is, that the keeper of the prison would not receive them as prisoners. He was the wisest of all.

While these two gentlemen were making what the Parisians called the *tour de force*, Malet proceeded to General Hulin, who then commanded the garrison of Paris, and the first division in the absence of Junot, who was then in Russia. General Hulin did not know Malet. The latter went immediately to his place of residence, and under the protection of his uniform and epaulettes, he penetrated as far as the room adjoining that in which Hulin was in bed. On learning that a general officer wished to see him, Hulin immediately rose, threw on his robe-de-chambre and went into the room where Malet was waiting. The latter immediately informed him that the Emperor was dead, and that a new government had been established. Hulin fixed his eyes upon General Malet.

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The thought struck him that the whole was a fabrication. But he was alone and had no means of summoning assistance, and Malet spoke of troops which he had brought with him. Hulin was a man of decision and presence of mind. After pretending to examine attentively the Senatus Consultum, and the nomination of Malet, he went to his desk for the pretended purpose of comparing the signature, but, in reality, to get a pair of loaded pistols which were in one of the drawers. Unfortunately, Malet perceived him by the reflection of a looking-glass which was near him. He stepped up to Hulin and fired a pistol almost close to his head. The ball entered his left cheek and he fell. Malet, thinking he had killed him, hastily ran down stairs, and left the head quarters, which were then in the Place Vendome. After giving orders to the soldiers not to suffer any one to come out, he proceeded to the hotel of Doucet, the commander of the first mililitary division. He knew Malet well, and after learning the extraordinary story of the Emperor's death, and the Senatus Consultum, he very coolly asked him by what authority he had been liberated, and gave him to understand that he must immediately return to his place of confinement.

Whilst Commandant Doucet was saying what Rovigo and Pasquier ought to have said, Malet resolved to discharge at his head the other pistol which he had in his pocket. He was in the act of drawing it out, when two men entered the room. Doucet made a motion to them to secure

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Malet, which they immediately did. These two men were Laborde, adjutant of the garrison of Paris, and Pasques, an inspector of police. It was Pasques who, at the signal given by General Doucet, seized Malet by the two elbows, and dragged him backwards to the ground before he had time to draw out the pistol. His hands were bound, for he was very violent, and it was not till Doucet went to the head-quarters of the 1st division, that he learned all that had happened. Hulin's wound was apparently very serious; but fortunately it did not prove so dangerous as was at first apprehended, and he speedily recovered.

Endeavours were made to give great importance to this conspiracy, by pretending that Malet was in correspondence with foreign governments. There appears no ground for believing this to have been the fact. The silence he maintained on his trial proves only one thing: viz. that he had nothing to tell.

Doucet made a round of the different ministerial offices, and reinstated the functionaries in their places. The arch-chancellor had not been disturbed in his, for a very plain reason: Malet was sure of Cambacerès. All that was necessary was to get possession of the helm.

On the morning of the 23rd October I was in my dressing-room, when I overheard rather an animated colloquy between M. Fissont, Junot's secretary and Madame Lallemand. In a few moments, Madame Lallemand came to my door and said:

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"*Chère amie*, do you know what M. Fissont has been telling me?—For my part, the story is as unintelligible to me as if he had been speaking Greek."

"What is it?" enquired I. "Is there any news from the army?"

"It is news indeed," replied she, "but not from the army," and she burst into an immoderate fit of laughter. "Fissont has been telling me that the Duke de Rovigo and Baron Pasquier were this morning arrested and sent to La Force by General Malet; and that Malet is now safely lodged in the Abbaye, or the Temple, or somewhere or other, after having fired a pistol at M. Hulin, who is dangerously wounded."

"What nonsensical story is this?" said I, for I looked upon it as nothing but a joke, the drift of which I was unable to comprehend.—But when I could no longer doubt the truth of it, I confess I was lost in amazement. All Paris indeed seemed to be bewildered, except the two heroes of the extraordinary adventure. They were overjoyed at their escape; and in truth they were more fortunate than they had reason to hope; for on the return of the Emperor, he dismissed no one, except poor Frochot, whose only fault consisted in having too readily believed that an Emperor was mortal like any other man. But those who were much about the court could plainly perceive that the Duke de Rovigo was not so much in favour as he had previously been; and as to Baron Pasquier, he was more than ever distant from the red toga which his high character,

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and his talents as a magistrate, fitted him better than any one else to wear.

A court martial was assembled, and Malet, Guidal and Lahorie were unanimously condemned to death. The trial lasted three days and three nights, during which time Malet behaved with admirable spirit, and neither did nor said anything reprehensible.

"My object was to destroy the despotic power which Napoleon exercises over the whole world," said he to his judges. "I confess this, therefore what need is there for further discussion? You are endeavouring to prove that I have accomplices. I tell you again that I have none."

The three prisoners were sentenced to be shot. On the 27th of October, at three in the afternoon, they were conducted to the plain of Grenelle. Malet walked with a firm step towards the place where the file of soldiers was drawn up.

"They are very young," said he, looking at the conscripts who were to fire at him.

The prisoners were ranged all three abreast, and the file fired all at once. After the first discharge General Malet still remained standing!—He was wounded, but not mortally. On the second discharge he fell, though not quite dead. It has been alleged, though I cannot say with what degree of truth, that the soldiers struck him with the butt ends of their muskets to extinguish the lingering spark of life.

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CHAPTER XIX.

A chapter of anecdotes—M. Hervé's conspiracy—The ladies of honour and their diamonds—The arch-chancellor—The country-house at Belleville—The plot discovered—Latude and Madame de Pompadour—Exile of M. Hervé—A mystification—A journey to Fontainbleau—The Emperor's displeasure—The imperial writing paper—Examination of handwriting—M. Arbusson—M. Lavalette—The real offenders discovered—Prince and Princess Louis—Napoleon imitating Haroun-al-Raschid—The alabaster shop in the Passage du Panorama—The Emperor's loose coats—Mlle. L——.—The Medicis vases—An invitation to the Elysée-Napoleon.

HAVING in my last chapter said so much about the minister and the prefect of the police, I will here relate an anecdote connected with the police, which I omitted to insert at its proper date (1809), during the campaign of Wagram.

The Empress Josephine was at Malmaison, and the Emperor at Vienna. The Empress had with her a great retinue of attendants and visitors, and she with her accustomed amiability wished to see all around her cheerful and happy. One day she thought she observed the Countess Thalouet look-

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ing very uneasy and low spirited. She enquired what was the matter, and the countess replied; "that she had something important to tell her, but that it must be communicated to her Majesty *alone*." The Empress was alarmed, and desired the countess to follow her to a private apartment. There Madame de Thalouet informed her that she had learned, through a channel which admitted of no doubt, that a frightful conspiracy was on foot, and on the point of breaking out. "The blow," said she, "is to be struck at all the imperial family at once." The poor Countess de Thalouet, on being asked from whom she had received this information, replied that it had been communicated to her by M. Hervé de Morlaix, a man of worth and respectability, who was happy in thus being enabled to save his sovereigns from the danger that threatened them. The Countess Thalouet introduced M. Hervé to the Empress Josephine, who, being naturally timid, lent a ready ear to the story, and was so greatly alarmed that she resolved to communicate the matter privately to the arch-chancellor; since M. Hervé had made his disclosure on condition that it should not be made known to the police.

"If," said he, "the minister and the prefect of the police should be made acquainted with this affair by your Majesty, they will never forgive me for having been more vigilant than they, in watching over the welfare of the imperial family; and they will take care to thwart the discovery which I am about to bring to light. But the man, or

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rather the *monster*, who contemplates this dreadful crime, has some confidence in me, because I have promised him the money requisite for carrying his plot into effect. Your Majesty is of course aware that I shall advance this money only for the purpose of catching him in the trap. But to do this, I must have disposable funds, and though I am rich, yet all my capital is invested, and I cannot positively lay my hands on ten thousand francs, whilst it is necessary to command at least three hundred thousand."

The Empress might as well have hoped to find the wealth of India, as three hundred thousand francs in her treasury in the month of July. Besides, she had no means of procuring money; for the Emperor had placed every obstacle in the way of her raising loans. She held a council with her ladies of honour, and the result was, that they presented their diamonds to the Empress, and begged she would dispose of them as she pleased. She was touched by this proof of their devotedness; and reflecting that it was necessary to be cautious in the employment of property, which was doubly valuable, because it had been given from feelings of attachment, she determined to make the arch-chancellor acquainted with the affair. Cambacerès was greatly astonished, and though not friendly to Fouché, he nevertheless acquitted him of the charge of negligence, and expressed his doubts of the existence of the plot. When he was informed that the disclosure had

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been made by M. Hervé, he knew not what to think. He resolved to go himself to M. Hervé's house at Belleville, which was represented to be the place of rendez-vous of the assassin, who was to annihilate the whole imperial family. M. Hervé, far from being disconcerted, expressed himself pleased at the arch-chancellor's intention of making himself personally acquainted with the facts of the case. The arch-chancellor however obtained no information by his visit. He was shewn into a garden, at the end of which was a small door leading out to some fields, through which it was said the conspirator entered. M. Hervé explained the affair very cleverly, but the person to whom he explained it was more clever than he. Cambacerès thought the story suspicious. Moreover it was an awkward affair, in whatever way it might be viewed. If true, it was necessary that the government should immediately take cognizance of it; and if false, the dignity of the Empress was compromised. The arch-chancellor said nothing to M. Hervé, but on his return to Paris, he disclosed the whole matter to Count Dubois. Hervé's house was surrounded, and he himself put under surveillance. It was speedily discovered that he had speculated to a vast extent in the funds, and had lost such large sums of money, that he was on the verge of ruin. In short M. Hervé was a second Latude*,

* Latude was an adventurer, who conceived the project of gaining the favour of Madame de Pompadour by writing to inform her that chance had enabled him to discover a dreadful conspiracy formed against the king, herself, and the royal family. A box of

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and he had speculated on the alarm he might excite in the Empress' mind; first for the Emperor, who was most dear to her, and next for herself and all the imperial family. The Countess Thalouet, on whose fears Hervé had successfully worked, thought herself happy in being able to render the Empress so important a service as to make her acquainted with the supposed plot. All was going on well, when Josephine took it into her head to consult the arch-chancellor. This was fortunate for herself. It saved her a severe remonstrance on the part of the Emperor, who merely laughed at her, when he heard the story on his return from Wagram. The prefect of the police made a descent upon M. Hervé, who had imprudently kept drafts in his own hand-writing of the letters written by the *conspirator*. These letters were copied by a young secretary who had no idea he was doing any harm. In M. Hervé's desk other papers were found which amply proved his guilt, and in addition to this, he made a full confession. He was sent to prison, where

poisoned sweetmeats was to arrive at Versailles, as if sent as a present from Naples, or Spain; and these sweetmeats were to deal death throughout the court. This letter excited great alarm. The box arrived. The lieutenant of the police, who was threatened with the loss of his place, was furiously enraged against this intruder upon his functions. He employed active agents, and the whole plot was discovered to be merely a contrivance of Latude. He was confined successively in the dungeons of Bicêtre, Vincennes and the Bastille for the space of thirty-five years. I have frequently seen him. He was living in the year 1801.

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he remained until the return of the Emperor, who treated the affair very lightly, and merely called it a hoax upon the gravity of the arch-chancellor. M. Hervé was liberated; but he was exiled to Morlaix, and prohibited to return to Paris.

Another adventure, which happened at a later period, shews with what caution evidence, even to appearance the most positive, should be received, in a question which involves the punishment of any individual.

Count R. de S—— and M. Carrion de Nisas, one day received letters from the Emperor's chamberlain on duty, directing them to proceed immediately to Fontainbleau, where the court then was. Count de S—— was at his country seat. He immediately set off in a calèche with six horses, and proceeded to Fontainbleau with the utmost speed. But in spite of all his haste, he did not get there until after the arrival of Carrion de Nisas, who, as soon as he had alighted from his calèche, related to him an adventure which was not a little mortifying.

Carrion de Nisas being in Paris when he received his letter, was enabled to reach Fontainbleau sooner than Count R. He arrived at nine o'clock in the evening, greatly fatigued by his journey, and having largely paid his postilions for the speed with which they had driven him. He hastened to the *salon de service* the more eagerly, as he observed an unusual bustle about the palace. The chamberlains on duty, to whom he first addressed himself, stared at him as if he had been speaking

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Greek, and at length seriously asked him what he wanted.

" Parbleu !" exclaimed M. de Nisas, " I want to see the Emperor."

" You have told me so already ; but I repeat, it is impossible."

" But his Majesty wishes to see me."

" The Emperor wishes to see you !.... That is equally impossible ; for you are not on the list."

" But you wrote to me."

" Surely you are dreaming !"

" Here is your letter."

He showed the chamberlain the letter he had received that morning, and in consequence of which he had hurried to Fontainbleau. The chamberlain, after glancing at the writing, said :

" M. de Nisas, this is all a hoax. This letter is not my writing."

At that moment Count R. de S—— arrived, and far from clearing up the mystery, only helped to render it the more obscure.

" But at any rate, I will pay my respects to his Majesty," said he ; " that is a privilege which I am always happy to exercise."

" No doubt of that," said the chamberlain (M. de Tournou) ; " but unluckily there is a little obstacle in the way of your doing so now. The Emperor set off this morning at four o'clock."

" Set off," exclaimed the two mystified visitors with one voice ; " and pray where is he gone ?"

" To Italy," replied the chamberlain. They had now no alternative but to return to Paris,

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and some days elapsed before they heard any more of the matter.

In the meanwhile, the Emperor, who daily received by estafette intelligence of all that was doing at court, heard of the hoax, and was greatly displeased at it. The prefect of the police received strict orders to discover the individual who had dared to use the name of a great civil officer of the crown; and also to enquire among the individuals of the imperial household, how it happened that the writing paper, appropriated to the Emperor's private use, should have been procured for the purpose of playing off a trick.

It happened that the paper on which the forged letters had been written was of a peculiar manufacture; it had a cypher different from that of any other paper. This matter demanded investigation. The natural conclusion was, that it had been abstracted from the Emperor's cabinet, or from the *salon de service*, and it could have been taken only by some of the officers of the household, or the servants.

The Emperor's paper-maker was summoned to appear before the prefect of police. He acknowledged that the paper on which the letters were written, was of his manufacture. He was ordered to deliver up all the letters which he had received from court, containing orders for paper. The police then summoned five examiners of handwriting, employed by the criminal court, and laid before them the letters produced by the paper-

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maker, together with the two letters which had been sent to Count de S—— and M. Carrion de Nisas. The result of the examination was, that of the letters produced by the paper-manufacturer, there was one, the hand-writing of which corresponded with that of the two hoaxing letters. The letter in question was from M. Arbusson, a member of the council of state.

M. Arbusson was a steady, respectable old gentleman, whose appearance was truly patriarchal. On finding himself arrested, he was perfectly dismayed, and on learning the offence with which he was charged, his astonishment was mingled with indignation. He pointed to his grey hairs, and asked whether at his time of life he was likely to be playing tricks, which would scarcely be pardonable in a young page. He was shewn the hoaxing letters, together with his own, and was informed, that on a careful examination of the hand-writing, he was declared to be the culprit, and that the Emperor had sent a formal order for his arrest. M. Arbusson was confounded; but as he knew himself to be innocent, he made up his mind to endure the annoyance, and wait till the mystery should be cleared up.

Meanwhile M. Arbusson's arrest, and the extraordinary cause assigned for it, created a considerable sensation in Paris. He had many friends who went immediately to see him, and who felt great interest in the affair. Among the number was Lavalette, who was ever ready to exert him-

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self to serve his friends. After a vast deal of troublesome investigation, he succeeded in tracing out the real offenders.

" Give me two hours," said he, " I think I can convince you of your mistake; but at this moment, I am not at liberty to disclose the secret." At the expiration of two hours, Count Lavalette named the real offenders to Count Dubois.

The authors of the hoax proved to be Prince and Princess Louis. They were one evening in their box at the Comédie Française. Opposite to them sat Count R. de S—— and M. Carrion de Nisas, who were laughing very heartily. The prince and princess determined to laugh too, but at their expense, by sending them on a fool's errand to Fontainbleau. As the Emperor was gone, they hoped to keep the joke entirely among themselves; for they expected to arrive at Fontainbleau in time to desire the chamberlain on duty, not to show the letters, but to burn them. The affair, however, turned out more seriously than they anticipated; for poor M. Arbusson was conveyed to the office of the prefect of police; and they themselves incurred the deep displeasure of the Emperor. M. Arbusson was immediately conducted home, and M. de Lavalette suspended his report to the Emperor, until the prince and princess had time to frame an excuse for themselves. Napoleon did not very readily forgive tricks of this sort, particularly when his name was mixed up with them.

The following adventure occurred in the brilliant days of Napoleon's empire.

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It is well known that he was fond of going about Paris, early in the morning, accompanied only by the Duke de Frioul, and he was always greatly pleased when he escaped being recognised. About six o'clock one morning, in the month of March or April, he left the Elysée early, in company with Duroc. They bent their course towards the Boulevards, and on arriving there, the Emperor observed that they had got out very early, as all the shops were yet closed.

" I must not play the Haroun-al-Raschid so early," said he ; " besides I believe it was always at night that he wandered forth with his faithful Giaffar."

When they arrived at the Passage du Panorama, some of the shops were already opened. One of them particularly attracted the Emperor's attention. It was the celebrated *magazin* of Florence alabaster, which was kept then, as it is now, by M. L—— and his sister, natives of Switzerland.

There was at that moment nobody in the shop, but a servant girl who was sweeping it, and whose movements were much constrained by the fear of breaking any of the brittle, but valuable articles around her. The Emperor was amused at the cautious way in which she performed her task, and after he had stood looking at her for some time, he said: " *Ah ça!* who keeps this shop?.... Is there neither master or mistress here?"

" Do you want to buy any thing?" said the girl, suspending her labour. Then leaning on her broom, she rested her chin on her two hands, and

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stared the Emperor full in the face, apparently half inclined to laugh at his eccentric appearance. Certainly it would be difficult to imagine a more comical figure than Napoleon presented in his Haroun-al-Raschid costume, as he used to call it.

He wore the famous grey frock coat;* but it was not the coat itself, it was the make of it which rendered it so singular. The Emperor would never allow his clothes to be in the least degree tight; and consequently his tailors made his coats as if they had measured them upon a sentry box. When he married Maria Louisa, the King of Naples prevailed on him to have his clothes made by his tailor. The Emperor wore them most courageously for a short time; but he could endure the torture no longer, and he begged for mercy. He submitted the question to the decision of the Empress, who as long as she could ride on horseback, and take four or five meals a day, was always good-humoured and willing to agree to any thing. She therefore granted Napoleon full power to dress according to his own fancy; saying, that she liked the Emperor *as well one way as another*. Perhaps she would have spoken more correctly had she said: *she did not like him any better one way than another*.

With the loose frock coat above described, the Emperor wore a round hat slouched over his forehead, to prevent his being recognized. His unfashionable appearance, joined to his abrupt and

* Latterly he frequently wore a blue one.

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unceremonious manner, led the servant girl to conclude, at the first glance, that he wished only to purchase some trifle, worth about ten or fifteen francs, and that it was certainly not worth while to call her young and pretty mistress for so paltry a customer. But the Emperor thought differently, and after looking about him for a few minutes, he asked in an authoritative tone, whether there was any one whom he could speak to.

Mademoiselle L——, who had just risen, at that moment came down stairs. On seeing her, the Emperor was struck by her beauty and her elegant appearance; and in truth she might well have vied with the finest woman of the imperial court.

"Parbleu, Madame," said the Emperor, touching the brim of his hat, (for he could not venture to take it off lest he should be known,) "it would appear that you are not very early folks here. A good shopkeeper should look after her business better."

"That would be very true, Sir," replied Mademoiselle L——, "if business were going on well. But as it is, it matters very little whether we are in our shops or not."

"Is trade then so very bad?" said Napoleon, examining various things on the counter.

"Ruined Sir, totally ruined. I know not what will become of us."

"Indeed! I had no idea that France was in so pitiable a condition! I am a foreigner. I wish to make a few purchases, and at the same time, I

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should like to learn from so agreeable a person as yourself, some particulars respecting the state of business in Paris. What sort of vases do you call these?"

"Those are the Medicis form," replied Mademoiselle L——.

"They are very beautiful. What is the price of them?"

Mademoiselle L——— opened at once her ears and her eyes. The vases were marked at three thousand francs. She told Napoleon the price of them; but he merely nodded his head, and then said:

"Pray what is the reason that trade is so bad?"

"Oh, Sir, as long as that *little man* our Emperor is so madly intent on war, how can we hope to enjoy either prosperity or happiness."

As she spoke these words, Mademoiselle L—— threw herself into a chair, and the Emperor stood looking at her with the admiration and respectful interest, which her beauty was calculated to excite.

"Is your husband with the army?" enquired the Emperor.

"I am not married, Sir; I live here with my brother, whom I assist in carrying on his business. We are not French, we are Swiss."

"Ah! ah!" said the Emperor; and he uttered these exclamations with as much indifference as if he had been yawning. "Well, I will purchase

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these two Medicis vases. I will send for them at eleven o'clock. Take care to have them ready."

With these words, which were delivered in a truly imperial tone of authority, he touched the brim of his hat, and darted out of the shop, beckoning the Duke de Frioul to follow him.

"That girl is very interesting," said he to Duroc, as they left the Passage du Panorama. "When she told me she was a Swiss, I fancied I beheld before me one of the wives or sisters of the heroes of the Reutly.* Do you think she knew me?"

"I am confident she did not, Sire. No, her manner was too calm and too self-possessed. She had no suspicion of whose presence she was in."

The Emperor remained silent and thoughtful for a few moments; then as if suddenly recovering from his abstractedness, he looked round him with an air of calm dignity. Duroc, who described the whole of this scene to me, said he was certain that some unworthy thought had for a moment crossed the Emperor's mind, but that he had immediately banished it.

At eleven o'clock, two porters accompanied by a footman in imperial livery, arrived at the shop of Mademoiselle L———. The footman was the bearer of a little billet, requesting that the lady would herself accompany the vases and receive payment for them.

* The field in which William Tell, Valther, Furst, and Stanffacher took the oath.

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" And where am I to go ?" said Mademoiselle L—— trembling ; for on seeing the imperial livery, she began to regret the freedom with which she had spoken to her customer in the morning.

" To the Elysée Napoleon, Mademoiselle," said the footman. The vases were carefully packed and delivered to the porters, and Mlle. L——, accompanied by her brother, followed them, trembling like an aspen leaf ; yet she was far from suspecting the whole truth.

On arriving at the Elysée Napoleon they were immediately ushered into the Emperor's cabinet. He took three bills of a thousand francs from his desk, and presenting them to Mademoiselle L——, said with a smile :

" Another time, Mademoiselle, do not be so ready to murmur at the stagnation of trade." Then wishing her good morning, he retired into his interior apartment.

The brother and sister were both sensibly alive to this generosity. Mademoiselle L—— used to relate the adventure with the most charming simplicity and feeling. It had taught her a lesson ; and since that morning she readily admitted that the depression of trade may exist without any fault being chargeable to the head of a government. The *little man* too, had grown wonderfully great in her estimation, not because he had purchased from her a pair of vases worth three thousand francs, but because he had forgotten a remark which many others in his exalted station would have regarded as an unpardonable offence.

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CHAPTER XX.

Maria Louisa—Her apathy on the subject of Malet's conspiracy—Cambacerès—His sharp reply—The King of Rome and the *Enfans Trouvés*—The burning of Moscow—Discouragement of the French army—The retreat—The Kremlin—Proposed treaty with Russia—Arrival of the twenty-ninth bulletin—The Emperor determines to return to France—His narrow escape from a party of cossacks—His arrival at Warsaw—The Abbé de Pradt—Napoleon's interview with the King of Saxony at Dresden—His arrival at the Tuileries—The imperial levee—My letter to the Emperor—His answer—Duroc's visit to me—The Emperor grants me an audience—My conversation with him—Junot's wound.

MALET'S conspiracy produced an agitation which was felt in the most remote provinces of the empire. Maria Louisa was at that time at Saint Cloud. She shewed no signs of alarm, but took her daily rides on horseback in the surrounding woods, which for aught she knew might have been the haunt of conspirators. Only General Malet and his two accomplices had been arrested; and it was at first believed that they must have

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confederates, who would subsequently be discovered. This was not courage on the part of Maria Louisa,—it was her natural apathy, and a disinclination to trouble herself about a matter which probably she did not very well understand.

"What could they have done to me?" she said with an air of *hauteur*, to the arch-chancellor, when he went to Saint-Cloud to acquaint her with the affair. It seemed as though she meant to say: "I should like to know what they could have done to the daughter of the Emperor of Austria?"

But the arch-chancellor was not the man to be much overawed by great airs and high sounding words; for he himself had sat in judgment on a king. And this same Francis II,—this same Emperor of Austria, had been twice compelled to flee before the arms of France. Such things help to dispel the illusion which envelopes thrones. Death and flight are two events which show mankind as he really is—submitting to the common laws of fate. Cambacerès, departing a little from that cool solemnity which seldom forsook him, replied rather sharply:

"Truly, Madame, it is fortunate that your Majesty regards these events with so philosophic an eye. You were doubtless aware that General Malet's intention was to throw the King of Rome upon public charity; that is to say, in the *Enfans Trouvés;* and as to your Majesty, you were to be disposed of afterwards.*

* In the pocket of Malet was found a plan settling what was

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The news which reached us from the army of Russia was as scarce as it was discouraging. No letters passed; we were deprived even of that consolation which is so soothing to absent friends. Such was our painful situation in the years 1812 and 1813.

At that time the first rumours reached Paris of the burning of Moscow,—that horrible catastrophe, which the blind rage of Napoleon's enemies led them to characterise as an heroic deed, and which would have been furiously anathematised had the deed been perpetrated by his order.

When the deadly cold succeeded the flames of Moscow,—those flames whose devouring tongues spread through the Holy City with her forty times forty cupolas,—when the greater part of that army, surprised in the midst of security, saw that a return home was almost impracticable—then a fatal discouragement took possession of those brave men, who had so often faced the most formidable dangers.

Too soon our reverses began to assume a more decided aspect. In vain did the Emperor endeavour to conceal the real state of affairs by pretended confidence, and by issuing decrees respecting the theatres, dated from Moscow. Nothing could pre-

to be done with the members of the imperial family. The King of Rome was to be disposed of in the manner mentioned above. Maria Louisa was never informed what was to be her fate: it was by no means flattering to the pride of the daughter of the Cæsars.

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vent the truth reaching the army; and nothing could prevent it coming to us, notwithstanding the distance which separated it from the scene of the terrible drama.

Kutuzow, wishing to prevent the junction of Marshal Victor, attacked the King of Naples at Winskowo, and defeated him in spite of his obstinate and courageous defence. Napoleon then determined on his retreat. Thus, the whole of Europe in arms,—more than a million of men slaying each other—a capital burned and ravaged—widows and orphans weeping—graves opening to receive those who fell, even as they set foot on their native soil—all this tragedy was at length terminated by a calamitous retreat. After forty days' occupation, Napoleon abandoned Moscow—Moscow which he expected to see in all her Muscovite and gothic glory, with her oriental wealth, her gardens, her cupolas, and her roofs of gold—her palaces, and her boyards.—All these he found buried beneath a heap of ashes.

Marshal Mortier who was left with the rear guard, blew up the Kremlin and the arsenal. The Kremlin, once the residence of the Dukes of Muscovy—and which, all accustomed as it was to scenes of death and blood, found we were more barbarous than the early Scythians!—Who could have foreseen that the venerable walls of the Kremlin were doomed to the sacrilege of being destroyed by a French hand—a hand which should at least have respected a curious monument of antiquity! The magnanimous points of Napo-

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leon's character were singularly intermingled with puerilities, which are perfectly inexplicable in a man endowed with his eminent faculties.*

After the time appointed for leaving Moscow, the Emperor delayed his departure, though provisions were procured there with great difficulty. But flattered by his recollections of Erfurt, and relying with reason on the friendship of the Emperor Alexander, he offered to conclude a new treaty with him. The campaigns of 1805 and of 1809 had been terminated in that way, and Napoleon conceived that the campaign of 1812 could not be better ended. In truth he was justified in thinking so. But how were circumstances changed! Austria whose system is all paternal and conservative, never hesitated to sacrifice territory to save human life; but Russia pursued quite an opposite course. Not but that she still followed the track of her ancient sovereigns, who regarded their subjects only as slaves—but because the locality, the change of manners, and especially of language,—all required different measures. Napoleon was not sufficiently acquainted either with Russia, or the character of Alexander. He thought the latter weak and incapable, because he had gained him over without difficulty at the time of the treaty of Tilsitt. He therefore supposed that the proposals

* I have been assured that nothing was more unnecessary than the destruction of the Kremlin. But the Emperor determined it; for the purpose of leaving a trace which should for ever mark his passage.

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made by General Lauriston might possibly be discussed, but that they would at all events be accepted. No such thing! Five weeks were lost in useless negociations, though the first few days might have shewn what would be the result; and on the 23rd of October 1812, the celebrated retreat commenced by the evacuation of Moscow.

Junot said to me on his return from Russia: 'I never in the whole course of my life saw any thing so admirable as Ney's conduct during the retreat from Moscow. It was a miracle of courage, talent, and of every quality which a military commander can require or possess."

The couriers were at length permitted to pass, and the twenty ninth bulletin dated Malodeczno, the 3rd of December, arrived in Paris on the 18th. Then the illusion which had fascinated us vanished. We saw our fate at once. The sad truth could no longer be concealed from us. It seemed as though we were now doomed to expiate all our past glory. The most gloomy forebodings had indeed prevailed; the bulletins had reached us only at long intervals, and letters had been intercepted. The Emperor was now cruelly candid; but any thing was preferable to uncertainty. The 29th bulletin fully and plainly stated the losses.

The Emperor arrived in Paris on the 20th December, the day after the publication of the bulletin. Napoleon had determined on his return to France amidst all the disasters of the retreat. He first mentioned his intention to Duroc.

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" If you had heard him," said the Duke de Frioul when relating this conversation to me, " you would have admired him more than in any other circumstance of his life." Napoleon next intimated his intended return to the Duke de Vicenza, who had lost his brother in the general mortality, and who was desirous to return to France to console his mother. Napoleon told him that he should travel under his name. The matter was also communicated to Berthier, who, with the Dukes of Frioul and Vicenza, were the only persons to whom the Emperor imparted his secret. On the 5th of December he set off for Smorgony, after a long conference with General Hogendorp, the Governor of Wilna, whom he ordered to make every possible exertion to collect provisions and ammunition in the last mentioned town.

" *I shall have more weight* on my throne at the Tuileries than at the head of the army," said he, to the few persons who were near him at the moment of his departure ;—and he was right.

On the following night he had a narrow escape at Ochsmiana. This was a small town, half fortified, and occupied by a party of Kœnisberg troops. On the Emperor's arrival, a party of cossacks who entered the town by a surprise, had just been repulsed. It was a chance that the Emperor was not taken.*

* This must have been a most unpardonable instance of neglect on the part of the officer who had the command of the town. The great Condé said : " The most able general may have the misfortune to be beaten, but never to be surprised."

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On his arrival at Wilna, Napoleon stopped a short time to see the Duke of Bassano, for whom he entertained a most sincere friendship and esteem. He asked the duke some questions respecting the condition of Wilna, then a point of the utmost importance to the army. At Warsaw, where he arrived at one in the afternoon, he would not alight at any private house. He went to the Hotel d'Angleterre, and immediately sent for M. de Pradt, who had been dispatched to Warsaw to collect information, and draw up reports on the state of the country. M. de Pradt remained for some time with the Emperor in a little parlour on the ground floor of the Hotel d'Angleterre, for Napoleon would not allow any other apartment to be prepared for him.

It is a curious fact that in this same parlour in which the Emperor dined on the day of his arrival at Warsaw, the dead body of Moreau was for a moment deposited, when the traitor's remains were conveyed into the country for which his perfidious hand had pointed cannon against his countrymen and his brothers in arms. The funeral convoy passed through Warsaw, and rested at the Hotel d'Angleterre, and the coffin was placed in the little parlour, in which Napoleon had dined a few months previously.

Nine days after his departure from Smorgony, Napoleon was at Dresden, where he had a short interview with the King of Saxony. From Dresden he proceeded to Erfurth. There he left his sledge, and got into the travelling carriage of M. de Saint-

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Aignan, the minister from France to the Duke of Weimar, and brother-in-law of the Duke of Vicenza. He afterwards passed through all the towns of the frontiers, even Mentz; and on the 19th of December, a quarter of an hour after midnight, he arrived before the front gate of the Tuileries. Since Malet's conspiracy, unusual vigilance had been observed in all that regarded the police of Paris, and the guard of the palace. The Empress was about to retire to bed when the Emperor's calèche stopped at the gate. The guards did not at first recognize him in the little vehicle, in which he was seated with the Duke de Vicenza, who after a fortnight's *tête-à-tête*, escorted the Emperor to the door of Maria Louisa's chamber, and he himself hastened to take that repose of which he stood so greatly in need.

Before day-break on the following morning (the 20th of December,) the cannon of the Invalids announced to the city of Paris that the Emperor had returned. I was then too ill to go to the Tuileries. I dispatched my brother thither, as I was very anxious to have intelligence of Junot. Albert on his return informed me that the Emperor's levee had never been so splendid, nor so numerous. As to Napoleon himself, he was most kind and affable, sympathizing in all the anxiety which prevailed, and in the most touching manner, soothing the fears of fathers and brothers who came to obtain intelligence of their relatives.

When I heard of the arrival of the Emperor, I could not repress a shriek of joy; for I doubted

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not that the commanders of corps would speedily follow him. So great was the crowd on the following morning when my brother went to the Tuileries, that he could not see the Emperor. I waited for several days, but not hearing any news, nor receiving any message, I became alarmed, and I wrote to the Emperor. It was impossible for me to go to the Tuileries; for I was so extremely ill, and could only pass from one chamber to another by being carried on a sofa by two servants. The anxiety I had suffered for the space of a year had brought on a nervous attack which threatened to be fatal.

In my letter to the Emperor, I mentioned Junot with feelings of deep pain. I really feared I should perhaps never see him again; for I was very ill. Then his letters to me were so melancholy, that I could not restrain my tears on reading them. I saw that that noble and devoted heart had been wounded by a circumstance of which I was ignorant, but the existence of which was revealed to me by the sad tone of his letters. On the day following that on which I had written to the Emperor, I saw my dear friend Duroc, who called on me. He brought me the Emperor's answer. It was an assurance that I might make myself perfectly easy, and that Junot was well.

"But I know the contrary," I replied, looking steadfastly at Duroc; "and so do you, my dear duke; you know it well."

Duroc cast down his eyes, and made no answer.

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" Duroc," I said, taking him by the hand, " I am very ill; probably I may not live to see those trees bloom again, (and I pointed to the trees in my garden.) Tell me the truth. What has occurred between the Emperor and Junot ?"

" Nothing new," he answered.

There was no insincerity in this answer; for he supposed I knew of the two bulletins; but they had been carefully concealed from me, to avoid increasing my alarm. A letter from Junot, which had been delayed on the road, had however just then been delivered to me. But notwithstanding the tone of cheerfulness which he endeavoured to impart to it, I could discern that it had been written under very uneasy feelings. I was determined to know the cause of this.

" What is this bulletin of the 23rd," I enquired of Duroc. He answered evasively, and left me much more unhappy than I can describe.

Next day, I again received a letter from Junot, in which he desired me to solicit an audience of the Emperor, and to ask for his *congé*, as he was very ill.

A few days afterwards, I received a third letter which was of so melancholy a character, that notwithstanding the feeble state I was in, I resolved to see the Emperor. I accordingly wrote, not to the chamberlain on duty, but to Duroc, requesting that he would ask the Emperor to grant me a short audience. As I could never rise before six or seven in the evening, I begged that Duroc in soliciting the audience, would explain to the

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Emperor the state of my health. The Emperor immediately answered that he would receive me on the following evening at nine o'clock.

This interview distressed me by anticipation. I was fearful that my strength would not carry me through it. I sufficiently understood from Junot's letter, as well as from some words which had fallen from Duroc and Berthier, that the Emperor had treated Junot very severely. My object was to appeal to his feelings, and to entreat him to spare those of a man who was most devotedly attached to him.

I repaired to the Tuileries at half past eight; for I wished to recover from my fatigue so as to be enabled to speak calmly and collectedly. I waited nearly an hour. Though the Emperor had himself fixed nine o'clock, I was not called until nearly half-past nine.

As soon as he saw me, he uttered an exclamation which shewed how much he was surprised and grieved at my altered looks.

"*Mon Dieu*, Madame Junot, what has been the matter with you? you are very ill—that's certain; I see now that it is not mere vapours."

I answered by a melancholy smile; for at that time I believed I was dying!

"Ah!" continued he, "I was told that you were only pretending to be ill."

"And was your Majesty informed what reason I could possibly have for acting so silly a tragedy; comedy, I cannot call it!" So saying I shewed him my hands, they were those of a skeleton, and

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my fingers were so thin that I could not wear my rings.

" No," replied the Emperor good-humouredly, " only I think I have heard that your illness was merely a pretence for getting rid of your attendance on Madame, and for tendering your resignation, in order to become an *honorary* lady of honour."

" But it strikes me, Sire, that I need not have sought any pretext for a thing so reasonable. The wife of the Governor of Paris has duties to fulfil which prevent her from holding any place at court. If your Majesty would be pleased to recollect what I before had the honour to mention to you on this subject. One day I was obliged to leave a party of eighty, at dinner at my house, with the best apology I could frame. They were fortunately the officers of the garrison, who were just as well pleased with not having ladies at dinner. But the thing was not the less awkward, though I could not help it."

The Emperor looked at me attentively. We were both standing ; I felt at that moment such a lassitude, that I was obliged to support myself against the table, I applied my smelling-bottle to my nose. Napoleon saw this, and taking me by the hand, he threw me, rather than seated me, on an arm-chair and took a seat near me.

" What is the matter," said he, " you are uneasy about Junot. Is it not so? He will return soon. But, tell me, does he not complain very much of me. Come, tell me the truth !"

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"No, Sire, he does not complain; whenever he speaks of your Majesty to me, it is in terms of respect and affection."

"What, does he not complain?" he repeated once more.

"No, Sire!"

The Emperor looked me full in the face, as if to see whether I had made any concealment; but I had told him the truth. My friends from motives of kindness, had kept me in ignorance of all that was going on. The Emperor was aware that he had not behaved as he ought to have done to an old friend; and I knew that he felt some self reproach, if not remorse. Napoleon was playing with a white glove which was lying on his desk. It was a small lady's glove, and I presume it belonged to Maria Louisa. After a short pause, he broke silence and said:

"Why did you not bring me some of Junot's letters? I am curious to see why he complains of me; for I say again, I am confident he does complain." With these words he rose and threw the glove away with great emphasis. "Yes," continued he, with encreasing violence, "he does complain! They all complain! In short I have created nothing but ingratitude. Among all the men I have elevated, there is not one who is grateful! not one who loves me!"

At this moment he turned towards me, and suddenly stopped short as if alarmed. No doubt my looks did alarm him, for I felt at that moment, as if I had been dying. The cruel words of the

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Emperor touched me to the very quick! To hear him—Napoleon! say he was not beloved by that man whose death may not unjustly be attributed to his ill-requited attachment to his sovereign! This was too much. I had not strength to bear unmoved this attack on Junot. I closed my eyes and endeavoured to repress my tears; if I had spoken a word, I should have lost my self-command; and I knew how much the Emperor disliked what he called *scenes*. Yet heaven is my witness that at that moment the fear of displeasing him was what concerned me least; but I thought of Junot.

The Emperor, as I have mentioned, appeared to be alarmed at my paleness. He stepped up to me, took me by the hand, and said in a tone of kindness:

"Come, come; what is the matter? Is this because I said people were ungrateful? Have you not found them so yourself? Who is it that has not met with ungrateful friends?"

"Your Majesty should make one exception," said I, "and not strike thus mercilessly on all. Do not think that your words are mere empty air. Every one that falls from you is carefully stored up by envy and malevolence. Of course I shall never repeat to Junot what your Majesty has said; but it may have been heard by other ears, and it may be repeated by other tongues; and what will be the effect, Sire? Not a fit of passion like that which would be shewn by Marshal Lannes, who though he loved you, treated

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you as he would treat his inferior; it will not be a *bouderie*, as you yourself style the ill-humour of Marshal Ney. No, Sire, it will be death—death to the man who loves you more devotedly than any other."

I threw myself back in my chair; for I was exhausted. I know not how I mustered spirit to say what I did; but at that moment I felt that I could have said anything. When I spoke of Marshal Lannes, the Emperor bit his lip, and appeared evidently embarrassed. I had called up mortifying recollections; for Marshal Lannes used sometimes to treat him with very little ceremony, and then Lannes was not so attached to the Emperor as Junot was. Before Napoleon rose to power, Lannes was a general-officer, with a reputation already made. He was not, like Junot, the work of the Emperor. The same may be said of Marshal Ney, who was never very cordially attached to Napoleon. He came originally from the army of the Rhine, and like all who belonged to that army, he had a sort of infatuated prepossession for Moreau. My stroke was therefore well aimed. Napoleon looked at me for some time with an expression of displeasure, which was sufficiently apparent, though he endeavoured to conceal it.

"How much you are like your mother when you are angry," said he; "*par Dieu*, you are as passionate as she was."

"This is ungenerous, Sire," said I, "you know I cannot withdraw—and I have told you long ago —more than ten years ago, that I will not hear

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even from your mouth, a word that is disrespectful of my mother."

"Well! well!" replied he, with a strange sort of expression, and placing himself so as to make room for me to pass. "Who detains you?—What do you wait for?"

"Your answer, Sire."

"What answer?"

"That which I am to transmit to Junot. I will not leave your Majesty until I obtain it, whatever I may be obliged to bear from you."

He looked at me for some moments, muttering to himself—"Singular woman—devil of a temper...." Then addressing himself to me, he said: "How do you and that obstinate fellow Junot, manage to agree together."

"Would you wish to know, Sire?"

"Yes."

"Well, I will do myself the honour to send you some of his letters. Your Majesty was pleased to ask me for some just now. You shall have them."

"Junot is ill, you tell me."

"Yes. Your Majesty knows he has received many wounds on his head. One of those wounds is of very old date."

"Yes—and it was received nobly and honorably. *Par Dieu!* Junot is a brave man—he faces the cannon as cheerfully as he would go to a ball."

"He has often given your Majesty proofs of his courage, and on a very recent occasion, you must have been reminded that the care of his life, was an affair of little importance to him compared

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with his duty of serving your Majesty and his country."

The Emperor looked at me, as if to ask me to explain myself. This was precisely what I wished to do, and I proceeded:

"Your Majesty's memory seems less retentive of recent matters than of affairs of old date.—But I repeat that Junot values neither his blood nor his life, when your Majesty's service is in question."

The Emperor now seemed to recollect the circumstance to which I alluded. It was as follows:

When we returned to Paris in the summer of 1811, Junot was still suffering from the effects of the wound in his face, which he had received at Rio-Mayor in Portugal. The scar was very deep, and it had made a great change in his appearance. The Emperor was at that time rather irritable. A cloud was gathering over our amicable relations with Russia, the affairs of Spain were going on badly, and a ferment was preparing in Germany. In short, the Emperor was uneasy in his mind, and this uneasiness frequently manifested itself in little ebullitions of ill-humour.

On the first Sunday after our arrival, Junot went to attend mass at St. Cloud. When the Emperor saw him, he stopped, wished him good morning, and then, looking at him with a scrutinising air, said:

"Ah! ah! this is the famous wound which the English newspapers have said so much about. Well! it has made you very ugly, Monsieur Junot."

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When Junot told me of this, I could perceive that it had vexed him. In fact, it was not a very feeling way of speaking to a man who, though a general-in-chief, had exposed himself like a captain of cavalry, who had his fortune to seek.

"Why did you not give him a sharp reply?" said I to Junot. "This comes of you and others making yourselves so humble to him. The Emperor never ventures to say anything disagreeable to me, because he knows I would give him his answer."

"Well," said Junot, "I believe you are right, and if he should say any of these harsh things again...." He stopped short, but I could easily understand what his determination was.

On the following Sunday, the Emperor again saw Junot, and fixing his eyes on the mark left by the wound, he said:

"Mon Dieu! Junot, it has made you very ugly!"

Junot for a moment reddened, as I learned from Duroc, who was present; but he soon recovered his coolness and said: "I am of a different opinion, Sire. I think on the contrary, that it has improved my looks; for I received it in the service of your Majesty."

The Emperor appeared confounded at thus receiving a sort of reprimand, couched in terms which it was impossible to find fault with. He never again spoke to Junot of his wound.

It was this little incident to which I alluded in my conversation with Napoleon. He darted at me one of those looks, which are not easily for-

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gotten. But that day I was invulnerable. Then suddenly changing the subject of conversation, and apparently wishing to make me pay for the little triumph I had gained, he asked me in a tone of ill-humour, why I was always so cordial with his enemies; and without leaving me to guess to whom he alluded, he mentioned Madame Récamier, and added, with a very imperative air:

"What do you expect will be the consequence, if you persist in braving me in this manner?"

"Your Majesty," replied I, "is pleased to apply very great words to very trivial things. I stopped at Lyons to see Madame Récamier, because she is the intimate friend of my husband, who cherishes for her the most sincere respect and regard. And I may also add, that I paid the visit on my own account; for I love her, and she is most unhappy in her exile: as unhappy as...."

"As Madame de Chevreuse," said the Emperor, cutting me short, and anticipating me. "*Par Dieu!* she is truly an object of pity. She is insane.... absolutely insane. As to Junot's friend, all I have to say of her is, that her house, and that of her father, were too long the rendez-vous, the club, of all the most demoniac portion of the Faubourg St. Germain. No, Madame Récamier shall not return to Paris. You may write and tell her so if you please."

"No, Sire, I would willingly console her, were it in my power; but I will not augment her affliction. Will your Majesty now give me an answer to Junot's request of returning to France?"

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"Tell him he may return; but only for four months. Write and inform him so yourself."

So saying, he made a motion with his hand, signifying that my audience was at an end.

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CHAPTER XXI.

My increasing illness—Junot's arrival—My children—Marshal Ney, Count de Narbonne and the Duke de Bassano—Corvisart prescribes for me—Opium—My recovery—Junot acquaints me with the cause of his uneasiness—The Emperor's peculiarities of feeling—General Kutuzow and *General Morosow*—The Moniteur—The passage of the Niemen—Marshal Ney's courage—Crossing the Beresina—Gallant conduct of Marshal Ney—M. de Narbonne's visit to us—Effect of Junot's wounds—The Emperor's letters—Mourad Bey's box—Junot's correspondence with Berthier—Prince Eugene.

My illness daily assumed a more and more dangerous character; and my brother, who became seriously alarmed for my safety, scarcely ever quitted me. I was so extremely weak, that I sometimes fainted ten times in the course of a day.

Whilst I was in this precarious condition, Junot returned to Paris. It was a melancholy meeting, for he found me almost sinking into the grave. I too perceived that he was alarmingly altered. His appearance betokened severe mental suffering. I could plainly see this. I could read in his heart,

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as in a book, and I knew all that distressed him—but no—I will not say *all*. My imagination could not have carried me to that terrible conclusion.

When Junot arrived, my brother was with me, and my children were at my bedside. Junot beheld his Napoleon, as lovely as one of Guido's cupids. Alfred, whom he had left ill and feeble, was now recovered and full of health, and his two daughters were as beautiful as angels. All this little family groupe was jumping round him, kissing his hands, climbing on his shoulders, and uttering exclamations of delight.

Junot had a heart formed to enjoy such happiness. But this was only a temporary glimmering of light breaking through the darkness. A weight of grief was preying upon his mind.

At first I could learn nothing from him, and he only once questioned me with any marked interest on the subject of my late conversation with the Emperor. I cautiously avoided telling him what Napoleon had said of the ingratitude of those whom he had benefitted. But I asked him whether he had complained of the disasters of the campaign.

" Never," replied he; " and yet an example was not wanting. Poor Ney, the man who, of all others, displayed the greatest courage, manifested the least patience. But, perhaps, after all, he alone had a right to complain; for independently of the brilliant battle of the Moskowa, he was sublime in the retreat—his conduct was above all praise."

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Another eulogium most gratifying to my feelings was that which Junot pronounced on Count de Narbonne. During the retreat he was the admiration of the whole head-quarters. Junot told me that he was always dressed as if ready to go to the Tuileries. No great-coat, no cloak, and his hair curled and powdered; and then his flow of spirits was truly astonishing. His conversation was as animated and agreeable as if he had been in one of the gayest salons of Paris. Junot likewise told me that another individual who had astonished him by his coolness and courage under the most trying emergencies, was the Duke de Bassano. The Duke rarely quitted the Emperor during the whole time he held the appointment of secretary of state and minister for foreign affairs; and he was as calm on the field of battle, as if he had been sitting at the deliberations of the council of state.

Junot, observing that I was daily becoming more and more weak, requested Corvisart to come and see me. On learning that I had been attended by Dr. Portal, Corvisart shook his head. He did not like his antiquated, gothic system. The science of medicine had made rapid advances, and yet the doctors of the age of Portal remained stationary. When Corvisart heard of my serious illness he came to me immediately.

When he saw me he started back; for he beheld a mere shadow. He was habitually rough and abrupt to his patients; but that day, all his

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severity was directed against the doctor. Portal was there, it was a sort of consultation. He was naturally very pale and thin; but on that occasion he was two tints more livid than usual.

"I should like to know, Sir," said Corvisart, "what you expect will be the effect of this treatment. The probable result will be, to see this unfortunate lady very soon stretched in her coffin. Do you know, Sir, that this is absolute murder?" He shook his head thoughtfully, and then turning to Junot, he said; "Do you place confidence in me?"

"As in God."

"Are you sure?"

"Upon my honour."

Corvisart took Junot's hand, and pressing it said:—"You shall take the place of poor Lannes in my affections. Like him, you are an honest and a brave man.—Ah! why was he snatched away so early!"

Corvisart always spoke of the Duke de Montebello in terms of affectionate remembrance. He was a friend of the Duchess's family, had known her and her brother since they were children, and he entertained an affectionate regard for them all.

"Well," resumed he, addressing Junot, "since you have confidence in me, you must follow the directions which I am going to give you. The Duchess must not eat any thing. When I say this, I mean that she must observe absolute ab-

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stinence. Since her stomach will retain nothing, we must give it nothing.* Your wife is very ill. The springs of life are not exhausted, because she in fact possesses the vital strength of a man. I scarcely ever found a constitution so vigorous. There is, therefore, hope; but it must rest on herself—on herself alone. It is for nature to preserve what she has created. The Duchess has a constitution which will enable her to live for a hundred years, if she be kept free of mental illness; for as she is strong, she suffers in proportion to her strength. In the condition to which she is now reduced, I see only one course that can save her: that is, to give her opium.—Not the opium of the east,† Heaven forbid! I mean the gum-like opium, still further mitigated by the admixture of gum. In this manner it is entirely freed of its narcotic properties, and is merely a sedative. Do you consent that she should take it?"

"Order whatever you please," exclaimed Junot, "provided that you save her."

That same day I took a quarter of a grain of opium, mixed in a few spoonfuls of *créme de riz*.

* I had a horror of any kind of sustenance. I followed Corvisart's prescription to the very letter, and remained *eleven days* without taking so much as a spoonful of *eau sucrée*.

† The opium which is taken by the Orientals, is in the state in which it is gathered. The resinous properties which pervade it, occasion all the mischief arising from opium-eating in the east. The kind of opium which I took is divested of all the properties foreign to its soothing nature, and does not produce the exciting effect of the Turkish opium.

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I continued it, and was saved. One of the most remarkable peculiarities of Corvisart's talent, was the rapid and accurate penetration which enabled him to discern, amidst the wrecks of existence, something which might serve to reconstruct the edifice. In this manner he restored me to life; and but for his skill I am convinced I never could have recovered. As it was, I continued long in a very weak state.

It was some time before I could prevail on Junot to impart to me the cause of that uneasiness of mind under which he was evidently suffering. He was fearful that the knowledge of it might tend to retard my convalescence. At length, by dint of continual entreaty, I prevailed on him to tell me. I then heard for the first time the history of Smolensko, the delay of the army corps, and the fatal bulletins.—But this was not the worst. Another wound, more cruel still, rendered all the rest incurable.

I enquired whether he had had a private interview with the Emperor. He told me that he had, and that Duroc, whose friendship had been that of a brother throughout the whole affair, had told him the effect produced on Junot by the bulletins.—The Emperor made no reply; and when Junot saw him, he conversed with him in the kindest manner possible, and in a tone of confidence little in accordance with what had passed.—Junot however, when he described that interview to me, added, "That it had not contributed to render his mind easy. Do you know

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why?" said he, "because truth alone appeals to the heart, and is understood by it. When the Emperor told me that his friendship for me remained unchanged. I saw that he was not speaking truth."

Napoleon, like all sovereigns, felt a pride in being beloved. Yet it is strange that in general he never thought of conferring any but worldly recompenses on the men who were most sincerely devoted to him; as if a single kind word, coming sincerely from the heart, would not have repaid such men better than a rich principality, such as he conferred on Davoust, who was not, on that account, the more attached to him. On these subjects the Emperor had singular ideas; and yet, at the time to which I here refer, he must well have known what it was to suffer uneasiness of mind. A fermentation then going on in Paris caused him to feel a degree of inquietude, which, in spite of all his fortitude and self-command, he could not conceal from those who knew him well. When the Empress Josephine shared with him that thorny seat called a throne, he could make her the confident of his vexations, and that confidence relieved him. —With Maria Louisa on the contrary, he was always obliged to keep up a sort of mask, and to conceal from her the cloud which would sometimes gather on his brow, "for," thought he, "she may write to her father; and the Austrian family, who hate me, would rejoice to learn that I have my turn of uneasiness and fear." Duroc alone knew what he

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suffered in the year 1813, that is to say, after his return from Russia. Junot likewise had a key to his mind which was impenetrable to all except those who, like my husband and myself, had known him from childhood, or who like Duroc saw him at all hours and all moments. I knew him well, and my last conversation with him sufficiently revealed to me, how much he felt the reverses which had befallen him within a year.

Whilst Napoleon was dejected by the first frowns with which fortune had visited him, the Russians were triumphantly chanting their songs of victory. Overjoyed at an event which they had no reason to look for, and which was indeed almost the effect of chance, they did not even see the sacrifice at which their success had been purchased, nor the fragile base on which it stood. Muscovite vanity was reluctant to acknowledge that *the weather* had had a large share in their victory; though it was a general remark among the common people in Russia, that it was not General Kutuzow but General *Morosow* who had destroyed the French army.

Junot was deeply affected whenever he spoke of the disasters of the Russian campaign; and he never liked any person to question him on the subject. When we were alone together, he allowed himself to give way to the profound melancholy which took possession of him,—and then he spoke to me in confidence of what he had seen. One day, at breakfast, he read a long paragraph in the Moniteur, describing the return to France

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of part of the troops from Russia. He threw the journal from him with a bitter smile, accompanied by a sort of imprecation.

"Is it not unworthy of the Emperor," said he to me, "to endeavour to conceal from the nation the extent of her loss; and after all, how is the truth to be concealed? Here is this journal speaking of troops arriving at Mentz on their return from Russia?" At this he shrugged his shoulders. —"Of the four hundred thousand men who passed the Niemen," added he despondingly, "not fifty thousand have returned."

He used to tell me that it was at the passage of the Niemen that Ney's bravery and talent were most conspicuously displayed. As to the passage of the Beresina, he could scarcely ever bring himself to speak of it; but one evening he described to us the horrors of the disastrous night on which the army passed that river. He made us tremble. Women and children were driven by the lances of the cossacks, into the freezing water of the river;—the bodies of the slain were crushed beneath the wheels of the fourgons in which useless riches had been stowed;—females were captured by the cossacks and exposed to every sort of outrage;—children stripped and thrown naked upon the snow,—shrieks and groans, mingled with roaring of the cannon;—and whilst the wrecks of the army hurried across the bridges, thousands fell into the river, without the possibility of being rescued! Twenty thousand prisoners were taken, —the treasures of Moscow were wrested from us,

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and we lost one hundred and fifty pieces of cannon. In short, we were in our turn plundered —and ignominiously, like vile brigands!

Junot said that if General Kutusow had not allowed the French to gain two marches upon him, and if General Wittgenstein had not committed some egregious faults, our army must have been utterly destroyed, not only at the passage of the Beresina, but more especially at the affair of Kown, and at the passage of the Niemen. In the retreat from Russia, Ney distinguished himself as he had previously done in the famous retreat in Portugal. He was always the last to retire, and the foremost to face the enemy, and to animate the drooping courage of his troops :—in short, he himself was worth more than ten battalions. But in the waters of the Niemen were engulphed, in spite of the supernatural efforts of the hero, the wreck of the finest army that France ever marched upon her enemies.

Junot suffered dreadfully from his wounds after his return from Russia. The last wound in particular, which he had received in Spain in the winter of 1811, had produced a severe shock on his frame. To this was added a return of pain from another wound which he had received in Italy, (at Lonato,) which had laid the skull open, and had left a furrow so deep that one's finger might be laid in it. This last wound had probably affected the fibres of the brain, and had deranged the whole cerebral functions. Without having lost anything of his intellectual powers, Junot was in

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a singular state. During the day he was often exceedingly drowsy, and could enjoy no sleep at night. It was most grievous to see him. One day he was sitting beside my sofa, in company with my brother, Duroc and General Valence. I had observed that the latter showed a very sincere regard for Junot, especially since his return from Russia. I felt grateful to him for this, and I was much gratified by the circumstance on which his friendship was grounded. I learned it from Duroc. On the day when we were all assembled together, as I have mentioned above, M. de Narbonne was announced. He had arrived only a few hours before, and hastened immediately to visit one of his dearest friends. Junot flew to him, embraced him, and then conducting him to me, said :

" Here is not only a friend, but a noble brother in arms !" and he shook him cordially by the hand.

M. de Narbonne expressed his concern for the state of health in which he saw me, and observing that we had none but friends with us, he again pressed Junot's hand, and appeared to question him by his looks ; not knowing whether I had been made acquainted with what had passed between the Emperor and Junot.

" It is just the same, my dear friend," said Junot, his countenance at the same time changing.* " Yes, I suffer here as I suffered when I was there, and perhaps even more acutely."

* He had confided everything to M. de Narbonne in Russia.

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He laid his head upon my shoulder, and dropped a tear! Oh, what were my feelings at that moment! Never since we had been married had I seen Junot shed a tear but once, and that was under the most distressing circumstances. I therefore knew well how much he was suffering.

" Junot, Junot!" said Duroc, in a loud tone of voice, " you are unjust to the Emperor. He loves you. I can swear that he loves you as steadfastly as he has ever loved you! Ask Madame Junot, who has seen him not long since. Tell him then that he is in the wrong," added Duroc, evidently impatient at my silence

" I have already told him so," I replied to the grand marshal, " and what more can I do? He will not believe me."

" Because you do not tell me so with the accent of truth, my dear. You would wish to convince me without being convinced yourself." Then raising himself he added :

" But, I know *well* what I do know!"

" Junot!" exclaimed M. de Narbonne, " I must say with Duroc, that you are unjust. The Emperor loves you. In the name of Heaven, whom does he love, if he does not love you : you, the oldest of his friends. I say you are unjust to him."

" And do you tell me this?" rejoined Junot, " you who have been witness of what he did for Rapp, when he wished to give him my army corps. If he did not give it, it was because Rapp

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was too noble-minded to accept the spoil of a friend. But the Emperor wished to take from me those soldiers whom I had led to the cannon's mouth at the battle of the Moskowa. He would have deprived me of the means of acquiring glory. And who could have dared to attempt this, but he who can attempt all? No, no, I am not unjust! Napoleon no longer loves me, and if I may venture to tell you so, he no longer loves *us*."

Junot was greatly excited as he uttered these words. His handsome countenance expressed the wounded feelings of a generous heart. His friends remained silent, but it was evident that they all sympathised with the old friend who had been looked coldly on in the moment of affliction, and repelled as troublesome when he sought, not for places, cordons, or favours, but for one kind word.*

"My dear Junot," I at length said, "it is your duty to speak to the Emperor. I have already told you so often, and I again repeat it. I believe that if the Emperor were aware of all that you suffer, he would not only eagerly repair the injury he has done you, but that he would do so in a marked way."

Duroc said nothing; but Albert, M. de Narbonne, and General Valence, all declared that I

* I love and revere the memory of the Emperor too highly to render it possible that any misconstruction can be attached to my words. I am not making an accusation, but merely stating a fact when I say that the reverses of the Russian campaign had greatly altered Napoleon.

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was right, and that Junot ought to do as I advised him. At that moment, M. de Valence hearing five o'clock strike, took up his hat and departed. As soon as he had gone, Junot drew his chair close to Count Narbonne, and said to him :

" Do you imagine that I have not done what you suggest ? Do you think then that I have been thus stricken to the heart without at least defending myself ? Duroc well knows that I have written ; he also knows what answer I have received."

Junot's features here assumed a fearful expression ; an expression which, alas ! I could afterwards easily account for. Duroc advanced to him, and took his hand, which he pressed :

" You distress me greatly, Junot," said he. " Be comforted. Compose yourself on her account," and he pointed to me :

" She shall see what I have done," resumed Junot. " I wish also that my brother and Count Narbonne should know it."

He went to his own apartment, and speedily returned with a portfolio, containing many letters. Some of these letters were from the Emperor. I recognized the hand-writing. This astonished me, because I knew that Junot kept all the Emperor's letters in a small box of sandal wood richly mounted in gold. This box had belonged to Mourad Bey. Junot brought it from Egypt, and from the the moment he became possessed of it, he appropriated it to the purpose of containing Napoleon's letters, of which he had at that period

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a great number. I therefore never thought of asking him for this box, although I much wished for it. The box itself was moreover enclosed in a beautiful case made for it by Jacob, and it was kept in Junot's bed-chamber.*

Junot then seated himself by my sofa, and taking several of the papers from his portfolio, he said:

"A few months before the bulletins appeared I had some explanations with Berthier, relative to a matter which then concerned me. It was on the subject of the fourth corps which I commanded, and which I had led from Italy to Germany, and even to the frontiers of Poland. Some difficulties were raised on the arrival of the Viceroy; — I also raised some in my turn;—not that I had any repugnance to serve under Eugene, a loyal and brave fellow whom I loved as my brother; but this new arrangement did not suit me, and I protested against it. The answers which I received betrayed a change in the sentiments of the Emperor. I wrote to Duroc on the subject. You recollect it," said he addressing himself directly to Duroc.

The latter nodded his head affirmatively; and Junot continued:

"The Emperor was then at Dresden. Here is Berthier's letter;—it is official in every word. Berthier sometimes plays the sovereign prince

* When the Duke de Rovigo came some months afterwards to seize the correspondence of the Emperor, he carried away the little box above mentioned, and I have never seen it since.

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to his old comrades." Here Junot shrugged his shoulders; Count de Narbonne and Duroc smiled.

TO THE DUKE D'ABRANTES.

Dresden, 28th May, 1812.

" Monsieur le Duc,

" I have to acquaint you that the Emperor has received your letter. I have also received that which you had addressed to me through M. de Contréglise. You are mistaken in supposing that the Emperor has shewn you any slight. His Majesty *knows too well your devotion to him, and how very useful your bravery is on the field of battle.* You have misunderstood the order which has been given, for I informed you, that you would remain under the orders of the Viceroy to command several divisions. But, that the matter may not be left in any uncertainty, I will make you acquainted with the intentions of his Majesty. You will retain the rank of second in command of the 4th corps, under the orders of the Prince Viceroy who commands several corps of the centre. But the fourth corps being a part of the army of Italy, and formed by the Viceroy, it is the Emperor's wish that the staff of that corps should be at the same time the staff of his imperial and royal highness, as commander of several central corps of the grand army. You are therefore in fact the commander of the fourth corps, under the orders of the Viceroy. The Emperor reposes every confidence in you. His Majesty loves you—and for

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myself I know enough of you to feel persuaded that this assurance will dispel the uneasiness under which you appear to have laboured.

" ALEXANDER,

" Prince de Neufchatel."

" This letter made a great impression upon me," observed Junot. " I acknowledged the receipt of it immediately; and though my answer was expressed in a single line, it sufficiently told how much I was mortified at this formal and official stile of correspondance from an old friend, even though it were a matter of business. Berthier no sooner received my letter, than he wrote me the following answer with his own hand:

Dresden, 28 May, 1812.

" My dear Duke of Abrantes,

" Why do you make yourself unhappy without reason. The Emperor's attachment to you is unabated. You are now on the field of battle, where he will be enabled to appreciate his true friends. We are of that number. The Emperor has no wish to offend you.—You remain with the 4th corps, as commander of that corps, under the orders of the Viceroy. It is the Emperor's desire that the staff of that corps, shall be the staff of the Viceroy, who is the commander of several corps. You have then that which is preferable, viz: the military command of the fourth corps. This arrangement is made only with a view to economy by making one

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staff less. The fourth corps has come from Italy, and was formed by the Viceroy—and it is natural that the staff of that corps should be his staff rather than that of the Bavarians—that is to say, the chief general staff.

"Set your mind at rest: the Emperor, in the conversation which he has had with me, has more than ever convinced me of the confidence he reposes in you. *General Junot lives in his heart—he bears in mind his former services—he hopes to have them renewed.*

"A thousand compliments, my dear duke,

"From yours,

"ALEXANDRE."

In spite of the assurances contained in the above letter, Junot still entertained some unpleasant feelings on the affair of Prince Eugene, and he again wrote to Berthier on the subject.—Notwithstanding the friendship which Junot cherished for Prince Eugene, he could not forget that ten years previously he had seen him a young colonel in his father-in-law's guards. Prior to that time, Junot had entertained for Eugene a sort of patronising friendship, such as might naturally be extended to a promising young officer, by a man of Junot's high military rank and reputation. All this was matter of such recent date, that it could scarcely be expected, that Junot should bow his scarred forehead to the young Viceroy. The truth is, that the illusion of sovereignty and power never consecrated any of the members of the imperial

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family, except Napoleon himself. This truth, evident as it was, the Emperor could never be convinced of, and many misfortunes may be traced to his blindness on this head.

In answer to the letter which Junot wrote to Berthier, and to which I have above alluded, he received the following, written entirely in Berthier's hand:

"Wilna, July 6th, 1812.

"My dear Duke of Abrantes.

"I have spoken of you to the Emperor, who considers it useless for you to come here. His Majesty expects to depart hence every moment, and your corps will move to-morrow morning.

"Continue to command the fourth corps. The Emperor does not wish to form a new staff for the Viceroy; but desires that he should have the staff of the fourth corps. The *Emperor esteems you. Do not torment yourself. Be patient. His Majesty knows your situation,—he will take it kindly of you to retain it.* You will fight at the head of the fourth corps. Is not that the principal consideration?—Is not that being really the commander?—Accept my remembrances, my dear Junot. The Emperor will soon take this matter into consideration, and every thing will be arranged to your satisfaction.

"Accept every assurance of my friendship,

"ALEXANDRE."

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CHAPTER XXII.

Junot's letter to me—The battle of the Moskowa—The wounded—Marmont—The bear in a pie—Junot's bad state of health—He applies for leave of absence—Loss of his baggage—Junot and Bonaparte at Marseilles—The bulletins—Junot solicits leave to go to the Emperor at Moscow—Receives orders to proceed to Moladitchno—His answer to Berthier—His letter to the Emperor—The report of the King of Naples—The battle of Smolensko—Duroc—His forebodings—Blameable conduct of Murat—Our situation in Spain—Letter from one of my friends—Rapp and Junot—Rapp's departure for Dantzic—His twenty-second wound—His sufferings from the cold—Personal resemblance between Rapp and Junot.

After Berthier's letter dated from Wilna, Junot became more easy in his mind. I received a letter from him dated from Mojaisk; it was written in a cheerful tone, and he spoke almost jokingly of the climate and the cannon-balls of the Russians. I subjoin this letter. It is curious, inasmuch as it shews how easily Junot was impressed with any thing which came from the Emperor. An assurance of regard rendered him happy—an unkind word reduced him to despair.

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" Mojaisk, Sept. 13th, 1812.

" I wrote you a few lines, my dear Laura, after the great battle of the 7th, just to shew you that I was not killed, and I now confirm the good news by these presents. I have to tell you, moreover, that though we have had to contend with most deadly weather, and a biting frost and wind which has swept to their graves vast numbers of those who were debilitated by fatigue and privation, yet I am very well, I may even say better than ever. This morning I made a breakfast that might have served for four. I was with Desgenettes, who was dying of hunger, and with whom I drank your health. He is very well and I beg you will inform his wife of this.

" The advanced guard of the Russian army is at most ten leagues from Moscow. It is said that the Russians wish to give us battle once more. Be it so. We are ready for them whenever they please.

" The Emperor was very well pleased with the conduct of my army corps at the great battle. The troops, certainly, performed miracles. I never in my life witnessed such a storm of bullets, grape shot, bombs, etc. All my staff-officers who were round me have been without exception killed or wounded. Poor Lagrave is killed !* Alexander has had two horses wounded by cannon-balls. As to me, I remained unharmed in the midst of

* It was at first supposed that he had been killed; but it was afterwards discovered that he had only been made prisoner and sent to Russia.

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all these dangers; I never even had occasion to move or dismount from my horse: and here I am well.

"You are of course in Paris at present, in the midst of your children, and I am here surrounded by upwards of three thousand wounded men, Russians, French, or allies. It is a frightful spectacle. Rapp, Grouchy, Nansouty, Friant, Gratien, are among the number.

"Kiss the children for me; and pray, my dear Laura, for my return as sincerely as I desire to be near you, whom I love with all my heart.

"I have written to the unfortunate Duchess de Ragusa* and to the marshal. Ask her if she has received my letter, and send me news of the marshal, if indeed he yet survives."

In another letter, dated Mojaisk, October 6th, 1812, Junot said:

"For the last two days the weather has been superb. I shall perhaps go to a bear hunt; if I kill one I shall send it to you in a pie."

A third letter, which I received from Junot, dated Mojaisk, November 15th, is too important to be omitted. I transcribe it at length because it is necessary for the explanation of some things to which I shall presently refer.

* I have already mentioned that the Duke de Ragusa was wounded at the battle of the Arapiles. The Duchess had gone to Bayonne to meet him, and had not then returned.

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Mojaisk, Nov. 15th, 1812.

"I have received, my dear Laura, your first letter from Paris dated September 12th. If you imagine that I let you enjoy so much happiness without jealousy, you are much mistaken. I envy you during the day when you see and caress your children; I envy you during the night, when you repose among them. I hope it will not now be very long before I share this happiness with you; it is the only happiness I shall henceforth care for. I am sorry to perceive that the slightest vexation of mind has an unfavourable effect on your health. You are not yet well; but I entreat you not to torment yourself about the bulletin of the 23rd. You are well aware that many innocent victims have felt the *fury of Vesuvius*. It is a dangerous volcano, and woe to him who is out of favour and within reach of the irruption. But Jupiter may be merciful and may save those whom, but a moment before, he had abandoned to the fury of the volcano. I will tell you all some time or other. I can only tell you now that if the Emperor had seen me that day, I should have been praised; highly praised, etc."

The following is from Essling, and is dated December 22nd, 1812.

"Well, my dear Laura, many days have again passed over without any letters from you, or without your receiving any from me; the fact is I have not been able to write to you. Yesterday your presents arrived at Kœnigsberg; I thank you for

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them; and I hope I shall be able to go and fetch them myself. I have written to inform the Emperor of the state of my health, the urgency of my affairs, and your illness which is augmented by my absence, and your knowledge of what I suffer. I have solicited a *congé* which is indispensable to me; for without it I cannot hope to recover my health, so as to be enabled to make another campaign. Request an audience of the Emperor, and urge him to grant me the *congé*. He surely cannot refuse it. I may yet serve him, but if I do not recover, I shall be disabled for life.

"This letter, my dear Laura, will I know give you pain; but I must write it. I could deceive you when our condition was worse than it is; but now the truth must be told. I cannot walk without the help of a stick, and I am unable to mount my horse*. This climate is killing me, I have lived so long in warm countries, that I feel more than others the rigorous severity of this atmosphere, which indeed has spared no one.

"I am going to Thorn, where I hope to hear that my *congé* is granted. The Emperor cannot refuse it. I do not seek it merely from the desire of returning to Paris; but the state of my health, yours and pecuniary considerations urge me. I cannot enter upon another campaign without an entire renewal of my baggage;† I must go myself

* Junot was at that time only forty-one years of age.

† He had lost the whole of his baggage, etc,; amounting in value to upwards of 200,000 francs. It included his campaign plate, his *fourgons*, his horses and carriages. He saved only a *dormeuse* calèche, and one box of plate.

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to Paris, and make one more sacrifice. It is only for your sake that I look forward to the future: for myself, I need but little. A man, who like me, has served through this campaign without complaining, may defy any one to imagine the possibility of a change in his sentiments. My mind which has been long resolved, is now more firmly made up than ever, and whatsoever may happen, my attachment to the Emperor is unalterable.

"Adieu, my beloved Laura. Kiss your children for me. Love me, and pray that you may speedily see me again.

"I shall set off immediately to Thorn. The cold is dreadfully severe.

"Yours,
"JUNOT."

I will now proceed to explain the circumstances which led Junot to the conviction that Napoleon was to him no longer the General Bonaparte of Toulon. This change was perhaps perfectly natural, but it was nevertheless, revolting to Junot's ardent and impassioned soul. He required a reciprocity of friendly feeling, the more imperiously, inasmuch as he knew how completely he himself remained unchanged. He was attached to the man, and not to the Emperor. He loved him as sincerely as when at Marseilles he determined to share the captivity of General Bonaparte, when the prison was but a stepping-stone to the scaffold.*

* Madame Mère seldom saw Junot without alluding, with tears

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It may therefore be imagined what was the state of his feelings, when he beheld the first bulletin in which his name was marked by the finger of malevolence and injustice. Scarcely had he recovered from his first mortifying surprise, than a second bulletin, still more unjust than the first, overwhelmed him.

He wished to see the Emperor, and asked permission to leave Mojaisk to go to Moscow. He hoped that a few moments' conversation would place his conduct, which had ever been noble, disinterested, and chivalrous, in its proper point of view. But Berthier still continued to send him letters like those from Wilna, which I have above quoted, and Junot was lulled by treacherous security.

Then came the disasters of Moscow ;—and for the first time Junot learned, that there was a greater misfortune than to suffer by Napoleon, viz. to suffer with him. What would he not have given to have had an empire to lay at his feet ? No one so well as I, can know the anguish he suffered.

He received orders from the Prince de Neufchatel to proceed to Moladitchno. The following

in her eyes, to that event in the life of her son. Albitte and Salicetti had caused him to be imprisoned, and had reduced him to the wretched situation in which he was, when my mother and I met him a few months prior to the 15th Vendemiaire. It was then that he observed silence respecting the escape of Salicetti, whom we had saved.—(See 1st vol. of these Memoirs.)

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is his answer to the Prince de Neufchatel, and I subjoin to it his letter to the Emperor.

Moladitchno, Dec. 3rd, 1812.

" Monseigneur,

" I have received orders from your Serene Highness to proceed hither. I have been here since yesterday evening, for there was not a village on the road, and not a drop of water to be procured. More than a third of the cavalry has been left behind and dismounted. Some went in search of villages on the roads opening into the high road ; others have proceeded to Wislieka, and it is said that some portion of the troops have taken the road to Minsk.

" Your Serene Highness's first letter directs me to proceed to Moladitchno, and there to assemble this cavalry, whence I must conclude that you think it may be assembled to-day. But some time is necessary. I will review them, count their arms, and report their condition to your Serene Highness. You will see what share of glory I may hope to gain from the command which has been given me for concluding the campaign. Never was a commander of my rank sent on such a mission ; and I can affirm, upon my honour, that I am not in a condition to resist fifty—I will not say cossacks,—but armed and mounted peasants. I will obey the orders I have received ; but, Monseigneur, if I am doomed to end my life in a way so unworthy of my past career, I beg you will inform his Majesty of this last proof of my devotedness.

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Let him know that I have lived his most faithful and most attached subject, that I shall never change to the latest moment of my existence, and that I confidently consign to him the fate of my beloved and unfortunate family.

" I have the honour to be, etc."

TO THE EMPEROR.

Moladitchno, Dec. 3, 1812.

" Sire,

" This memorable campaign is on the point of terminating. I began it with a command calculated to procure me glory, and I end it with one quite unworthy of my rank, and which can bring me nothing but dishonour. Two bulletins, Sire, have overwhelmed me with grief and astonishment. If public approbation is not the object most dear to me, the good opinion of your Majesty is that which I prize more highly than my life.

" The bulletin which mentions the march of the army on Smolensko, says that *I lost myself, and that I made a false movement.* The fact is, Sire, I did not *lose myself;* I only made on the second day a march of six leagues instead of eight, which I intended to have accomplished; but this matter was easily repaired on the succeeding days. General Tharreau lost himself through disobedience, though I had left posts of cavalry to enable him to advance on Boullianou. At ten at night, when I summoned my generals in order to arrange our march, General Tharreau

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was not to be found at the post which I had assigned to him. I concluded that he had remained behind, and sent in search of him. The officer whom I sent returned to the camp at three o'clock in the morning without having found him. I then recollected the opinion he had expressed on the preceding day, respecting the direction of our march; and knowing his headstrong character, I did not doubt but that he had determined to proceed to the right to reach the Mitislaw road. I despatched in pursuit of him Colonel Revest, the chief officer of my staff, and he found him more than four leagues distant from us. He did not return to the camp until four in the afternoon. I heard that your Majesty had reason to be dissatisfied with General Tharreau, and I hoped by dint of marching, to repair the fault he had committed. In my endeavour to screen him, I have brought upon myself the punishment due to his misconduct.* The whole of the 8th corps can bear witness to this fact. But I am only anxious that your Majesty should know the truth: this act of self-justification costs me dear.

" The bulletin detailing the battle of the 19th of August before Smolensko, accuses me of not having acted with *sufficient* firmness, consequently

* It would be absurd to say that Junot voluntarily incurred the Emperor's displeasure for the sake of General Tharreau. The fact is, that Tharreau was already in disgrace, and Junot knew what must be the inevitable consequence of bringing him to a court-martial. Junot thought that he himself could more easily obtain pardon. This was another of his illusions.

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I betrayed fear. Well, Sire, your Majesty may satisfy yourself of my conduct ; it was that day witnessed by General Valence, General Sebastiani, General Bruyères, and several others. I received orders to go and defend the construction of the bridges over the Boristhenes. I did so, and we crossed that river very slowly, on account of our artillery, the bridges being in a very bad state. The roads, which we were obliged to make, also retarded us considerably. I could not debouch from the wood until two o'clock, and I took up my position. I had received no orders to engage. I did not even know, Sire, what troops were fighting on my left ; but after the lapse of half an hour, and when Gudin's division arrived, the firing having recommenced much more rigourously, I mounted my horse and crossed a wide ravine with two battalions of light infantry and my cavalry. I arrived on a superb position in the enemy's rear. The plain, or rather the plateau which separated us from the position of the Russian rear-guard, was covered with sharpshooters and cavalry. Nevertheless, being convinced that we might be useful in the attack of the front, I sent forward my little advance guard, who discovered that the artillery would have to reconstruct a bridge in a village on the right, before it could pass. While this was doing, I sent to order the 8th corps to come and rejoin me as speedily as possible."*

* A few lines appear to be wanting in the above copy of Junot's

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The idea of Junot wanting firmness to enter upon an engagement, was pronounced to be absurd, even by his enemies, and his high favour had created him many. It was the King of Naples who had made that report to the Emperor. He alleged that he had addressed the following words to Junot:

"Come Junot—march!—forward!—the marshal's baton is there!"

Such was the account of the affair given by the King of Naples. But Junot told a different story, and he corroborated it by proof.—It was the affair with the *Vesuvius*, which he had explained to me in his letter from Mojaisk, dated the 15th November. In the first place Junot, conscious of having acted rightly, expected that the cloud which had arisen between him and the Emperor would soon disperse. He knew that the battle of Smolensko had not been attended by the result which the Emperor wished, and this disappointment sufficiently accounted to Junot for his not obtaining justice immediately. Junot waited long—perhaps too long. He at length perceived that though the Emperor must have been acquainted with every thing relating to the battle of Smolensko, yet he nevertheless observed silence. The King of Naples was to be at the head of the army on the Emperor's return to France. Whether it was that Napoleon did not wish to offend him by a formal contradiction of his mis-statement, I cannot pretend to

letter to the Emperor. But they are of little importance. The two affairs are sufficiently explained.

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say.—But whatever might be the reason, Junot never received a word of reparation for the injuries cast upon his reputation, and a thick veil will ever conceal the first causes of the intrigue hatched against him. The army was then in full retreat. Junot received the order from the Prince of Neufchatel, which he answered by the letter I have above quoted, and he wrote to the Emperor to explain matters, which Napoleon must have known as well as he did. The Emperor read Junot's letter, and he read it with considerable attention:—

"It is vexatious," said he; "but the bulletins are published."

This requires no comment, and I will not attempt to guess the motives which could have urged the Emperor to make an answer so devoid of all justice. I was long in ignorance of all these facts, and I thank heaven that I did not become acquainted with them sooner. Had I known them on the day when I had the interview with the Emperor, there would, probably, have arisen a more stormy explanation than that in which, according to the Memorial of St. Helena, he said, "he had allowed me to scold him *as if he had been a little boy.*"

After shewing us all these papers, Junot said:

"You know now all that has happened during this fatal year. This is the truth. Must it be by the mouth of Napoleon that my name is to be transmitted, under a false colouring, so positively. —This thought kills me."

"But surely," said I to Duroc, "something

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may be done in this affair. Formerly we might have spoken to the Empress Josephine. But how is it possible to reach the Emperor's ear through the medium of such a person as Maria Louisa?"

The disclosures which Junot had made to me and his friends, tended greatly to relieve his mind. He could now freely speak on the subject which distressed him, to me and Duroc, when the latter escaped from his prison, of which he was already beginning to feel the restraint.

One day Junot took him by the hand and said:—

"My dear Duroc, you have cause to complain as well as I. Indeed, as I said the other day, we have *all* reason to complain."

I had observed that since his return from Russia Duroc had become much more thoughtful and serious than ever he had been in his life before. I knew him well enough to be assured that his thoughtfulness was not caused by any thing personally concerning himself. I was not mistaken. He mentioned to us numerous circumstances calculated to create the most gloomy forebodings for the future.

The news which we received from Russia was not of a nature to banish these discouraging anticipations.—Murat had abandoned the army which the Emperor had consigned to him. The more it was disorganized, the more it behoved him to have remained with it till the last moment. But he said the affairs of *his kingdom* called him home.

Universal blame seemed to be attached to the

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King of Naples. The general officers, by whom my saloon was almost constantly thronged, since the return of Junot, expressed the most decided condemnation of Murat's conduct, in thus abandoning the army at the moment when new danger was impending. That danger was the more to be dreaded, since its counter stroke would be felt even in Paris. A little reflection might have convinced Murat of another fact, viz:—that the blow would shake Naples and his precarious throne, more violently than an eruption of his *Vesuvius*.

The danger to which the army of Russia was exposed, arose out of the equivocal conduct of Austria, and also from the position of the different corps which, being assembled confusedly on the Vistula, presented in their wrecks an image of destruction, which sufficiently revealed our misfortunes. The cavalry was completely destroyed—the artillery had lost all that entitled it to that name—in short, every disaster was combined in one mass, and presented an unequivocal declaration of our ruin. Such trying circumstances required another man than Murat, or even than Prince Eugene, to whom the King of Naples consigned the expiring remnants of the army. Murat departed on the 8th of January, 1813.

That year set in under the most melancholy auspices. The disasters of Russia seemed to have spread their deadly influence to the south. I still had many friends in Spain; and I every week received intelligence by officers returning to France, who brought me letters, to which they added their

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own accounts of all that was interesting. This intelligence was of the most discouraging nature. In these critical circumstances the conduct of our marshals was admirable; for even after the most glorious victories they found it difficult to maintain themselves. Marshal Suchet still kept possession of the coast of the Mediterranean; Marshal Soult by the most able combinations supported King Joseph in a kingdom in which the enemy had opened breaches on every side. It might be said that our battalions were still in Spain, but not our soldiers. The regiments, it is true, were there; but the men were no longer the same. They were now sinking under the two scourges of war, *maladie de pays* and assassination. This last was the most severely felt, because the agony was incessant, owing to the continual terror in which the victim was kept. The following is a letter which I received from a friend in Spain describing our situation in that country at the time here referred to:—

"However wretched we might be when you were here, our present condition is far worse.—The bravest man now feels his courage fail him. —How can we feel any desire to conquer, when the victory of to-day is null to-morrow.—I wrote to the Emperor a few days ago, assuring him that the Spaniards might be overcome, or even destroyed; but conquered or subjugated, never. There is no truce, no peace to be hoped for, with a people in whom political resistance is continually fostered and maintained by hatred and fanaticism

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Do you know what they recently did in the mountains of Soria, and on the coast of Zamora? —They had been disarmed and deprived of their muskets and pikes—those pikes which you may recollect were made to accustom them to the Polish lancers.—Would you believe that they replaced their arms in less than a week?—They established forges in the mountains. There they forged pikes and sabres, and melted balls from lead which they had collected, I know not where. —As to the muskets, I verily believe that they get them from demons, with whom they associate. The amount of the arms taken from them, and which they have replaced, is incredible.—Besides, they can make arms out of any thing. If they could not get iron, they would make battle axes of stone, and cannon of wood,* with which they would fight as well as with any other arms.— And then assassination may be committed in so many forms; and the more cruel it is, the more popular!"

This letter was written by a gentleman well acquainted with Spain, and I was much grieved on perusing it. But alas! while we were deploring our misfortunes in Spain, clouds were gathering in the north, whose thunder bolts were soon to break over our heads.

* It is not absurd to suppose that Spaniards might make cannon of wood. In 1793, the French royalists of Lozere gained a great battle over the republicans with cannon of wood, hooped with iron. The arsenal of Saltzburgh contains some specimens of leather cannon.

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Rapp kept up a regular correspondence with Junot. The latter was deeply sensible of Rapp's generous conduct, when the Emperor wished to transfer to him Junot's army corps. When Rapp was about to return to Dantzic, Junot said to him:

"You are my brother in arms; the man of honour on whom I am proud to confer that title —I shall never forget your conduct."

Rapp could not see that he had done anything deserving of praise, and seemed quite astonished at Junot's gratitude. He shook his hand, and said:

"Farewel, my friend! between ourselves, I am going on an errand of life or death."

Junot was greatly interested in all that concerned Rapp, during his perilous mission in Russia. One day he received a letter from him which he brought to me, and which was remarkable for the melancholy which it at once disguised and revealed. After crossing the Beresina with the Emperor, he advanced with him on Wilna. At Smorgoni, the Emperor imparted to him his intention of proceeding to France to obtain resources, and to rouse the national patriotism.

"You see, my dear Rapp," said Napoleon, "that the enemy is about to invade us, and I would not that France should lose even one of her jewels."

"If," said Rapp, when he afterwards described to me his separation with the Emperor, "if he quitted the army, it was for the purpose of saving

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the wrecks of it;—it was to raise up a barrier between us, and the Prussians and Russians, and not because he wished to fly from the cold, as has been alleged by some, whom I should like to punish for their insolence." This was said in 1818.

Poor Rapp!—In 1813 he addressed to Junot a letter which he dictated to his secretary, because he, himself, was unable to write on account of the dreadful state of his hands. This letter gave Junot great concern. It stated, that when the Emperor bade farewel to Rapp, at Smorgoni, he directed him to return to Dantzic; but that previously, he was to rally the army in concert with Ney, and the King of Naples. At Wilna, he performed prodigies, not only of courage, but of humanity. He knew well that men, who, during the space of two months had received only three distributions, might be deaf to the voice of their commander, though they would listen to that of their comrade. It was in the latter character that he addressed them; but he was always firm, even with the utmost extent of kindness. One day he was seen carrying on his shoulders a wounded sub-officer who was unable to walk; and while he was carrying him, he gave a smart caning to a soldier who was ill-using a *vivandière*, in order to get a loaf, for which the poor woman had just paid fifteen francs.—In compliance with the Emperor's order, Rapp was anxious to proceed to Dantzic. But how was he to get there? It was necessary to pass the Niemen, and the cold was so excessive, that even the Russians themselves could not withstand

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it. However, Rapp was resolved to obey the Emperor's commands, especially as Dantzic had been in manifest danger since our reverses. He, therefore, engaged at Wilna two jews to conduct him to the Niemen. Junot received an account of this journey from an officer, whom Rapp sent to the Emperor to inform him, that he would never surrender alive, unless ordered to do so. We shuddered at the description which this officer gave us of what Rapp had suffered from the intensity of the cold. He was already covered with wounds,* and the cold had deprived him of two fingers of the right hand, and part of his nose. He had surmounted every obstacle to throw himself into Dantzic, and he reached that place, as it were, by a sort of miracle.

"My dear Junot," said Rapp, in a letter which he wrote to Junot after his arrival at Dantzic, "I have found my poor fortress in a sad condition. Every thing completely disorganized. But at length I have fairly installed myself; and he must be very clever, who can dislodge me. I am informed that the Russians are coming to try it with the Duke of Wurtemberg. Well! I await them with a firm hand, though General *Morosow* has deprived me of two fingers, and a part of my

* He had received his twenty-second wound on the day preceding the battle of Mojaisk. M. de Narbonne went himself every day by Napoleon's orders to enquire after Rapp. They were then at Moscow, and the progress of the flames obliged Rapp to remove continually from house to house.

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nose. There will be little danger now of the ladies mistaking me for you, etc."*

* There certainly was a strong resemblance between them, though I cannot precisely say in what it consisted. Junot was more slender than Rapp; and altogether more elegant in his figure and manners.

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CHAPTER XXIII.

The European tocsin—Proclamation of the Emperor Alexander—Napoleon's speech to the Legislative Body—The Emperor Alexander as the Pacificator of Europe—Sixth coalition against France—Defection of Prussia—Sweden bought for twenty-five millions of francs— Admirable conduct of Marshal Soult in Spain—Bernadotte's letter to the Emperor—France declares war against Prussia—Amount of the French army—Supplies granted by the Senate—The Emperor too well served—The guards of honour—Death of Lagrange—Duroc—A drive in the Bois de Boulogne—The child devoted before its birth—The game at billiards—MM. de Flahaut and Valence—The hundred bottles of Sillery wine—The bottle of Eau de Portugal and the bottle of Ether—Junot's new appointment—Duroc's visit to us —The Emperor's morning ramble—The corporal of the 32nd —Junot's interview with the Emperor—He departs for Illyria.

WARNED of his danger by the tocsin which the powers of Europe sounded on all sides, Napoleon once more summoned the resources of France, whose blood and treasures were never exhausted, when either were required in the defence of her glory and honour. To the occupation of Warsaw by the Russians, the Emperor answered

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by a Senatus Consultum, which settled the regency during the minority of the King of Rome. —To the first step which was advanced to attack him, he opposed the assurance of the reversion of his power.—To the proclamation of Alexander, which invited the Germans to shake off the yoke of France, he replied by his speech to the legislative body.

"I wish for peace," said Napoleon in that speech. "It is necessary to the world. Four times since the rupture of the treaty of Amiens, I have made formal propositions for it. But I will never conclude any but an honourable peace, and one that is suitable to the greatness of my empire!"

The Emperor Alexander soon undertook to play the part of pacificator of Europe. A manifesto from Warsaw, dated the 22nd February, followed the proclamation of the 10th from the same city. It called upon all the nations of Germany to declare their independence, as if it would have been less honourable to them to answer the appeal of Napoleon, than to bend before the lance of a cossack! Finally, on the 1st of March, the sixth coalition against France was proclaimed throughout Europe, and for the sixth time she proudly defied her enemies. On the same day Prussia, following up her old system of defection, deserted her falling friend, to form an alliance with one whose fortune was rising. The treaty of alliance between Russia and Prussia was signed at Kalisch. At the same time England and Sweden

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also signed a treaty for overthrowing the common enemy.

A man who was his natural ally—the brother-in-law of his brother, signed the treaty which was to create another enemy to France, and to Napoleon; —for the Prince Royal of Sweden did all, and Charles XIII was merely the shadow of a king. This new treaty of 1813, was only a confirmation of preceding treaties (24th of March and 3rd of May 1812); but, on this occasion, Sweden was bought. The price of her treachery was twenty-five millions of francs, and the cession of Guadeloupe, which had been abandoned to the English by General Ernouf. A revolting degree of baseness characterised all these treaties and capitulations.

Every day the most disastrous news arrived from Spain. Every letter that reached us brought intelligence of the loss of a friend, a battle, or a province. Marshal Soult, who by superhuman efforts had struggled with his position, which had now been rendered worse by the removal of the best portion of his troops to the north, was obliged to proceed to Valladolid in the north of Spain. This measure, which was indispensable, and which had been delayed but too long, had a serious moral influence both on the enemy and on our troops. It discouraged the latter in proportion as it gave confidence to the former; and our sojourn in Spain became more than ever precarious.

I think it must have been about this time that Bernadotte wrote to the Emperor, recommending

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him, *as a friend*, to lay aside his ambition, to moderate that *thirst of conquest* which was fatal to Europe. "I am disinterested," added he, "in this question, and you may believe that nothing but my profound attachment to my country and to you, prompts this recommendation."

Can any thing be conceived more preposterous than this!—Bernadotte, John Prince of Sweden, telling Napoleon, Emperor of the French, that he ought to sheath his sword when he, Bernadotte draws his.—Bernadotte was now allied to all those antiquated sovereigns which his republican pride had so long spurned;—but among them there was not one whose talent could cope with his. In this respect, all, except himself, were null. Another traitor, a renegade, a Frenchman, unworthy of the name, will soon appear upon this scene of war and desolation.

Whilst these preparations were making for the denouement of the grand drama, Napoleon was actively organising his means of defence. The guards of honour at once furnished these means, and became certain hostages for the security of the internal provinces. France, which had been unceasingly insulted by Prussia, at length took a decided step; not traitorously and in the dark, but openly in the senate of the empire. In that assembly the declaration of war against Prussia was read. This was a painful moment to those who, like Junot and his brothers in arms, were acquainted with the resources of France. They knew, for example, that the French army at the

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very time when war was declared against Prussia, consisted of only thirty thousand veteran troops. Its head-quarters were at Statsfurts near Hablerstadt. It was commanded by Prince Eugene, who had taken up a position on the Elbe and the Saale, the scene of our former glory. We were in possession of Magdeburgh, Wittemberg and Torgau.

The Senate granted the Emperor the supplies he demanded for repelling the meditated aggression against France. One hundred and eighty thousand men were ordered to be raised by the Senatus Consultum of the 3rd of April, 1813. Among these one hundred and eighty thousand men were the ten thousand guards of honour, who were the occasion of so much outcry being raised against the Emperor. In this, as in many other cases, the Emperor was too well served. He asked the minister of the interior for only two thousand guards of honour, and it was thought to be the most flattering compliment that could be paid him to send ten thousand. Thus eight thousand families vented their reproaches against the Emperor, and cursed instead of blessing him. In addition to the above supplies, thirty seven civic cohortes were created for the defence of the maritime fortresses.

About this time an occurrence took place which deeply affected the Emperor's spirits. It was the death of M. Lagrange, the celebrated mathematician. Napoleon was much attached to Lagrange, and was deeply affected by his death; indeed the

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event made an impression on his mind, which appeared almost like a presentiment.

" I cannot master my grief," said he to Duroc; " I cannot account for the melancholy effect produced upon me by the death of Lagrange. There seems to be a sort of presentiment in my affliction."

Duroc endeavoured to dissipate these gloomy forebodings, though he himself could not always escape their influence. One morning he came to see me. The weather being uncommonly fine, though the cold was still severe, Junot had ordered his calèche to be got ready in order to take me out for a drive. Duroc went with us; he had an hour to himself, and he had something particular to say to Junot. Fuentes was just then dead, and Junot was his testamentary executor. Count Armand de Fuentes had a daughter by Mademoiselle Bigottini, and Duroc happened to be similarly situated. It was on the subject of this child that he wished to speak to Junot. Duroc was a kind-hearted, amiable man, and a most affectionate father. I saw that he was suffering from an unusual depression of spirits, and his mind seemed to be oppressed by some melancholy thoughts, beyond those naturally excited by the conversations regarding his child. I gave him my hand and said:

" My friend, I hope you do not forget that I am here, and that you may command my services in any way."

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The excellent man looked at me with an expression of gratitude. He understood me; but something seemed to check him in his attempt to reply to me as he wished; during the whole of our drive I said all I could to satisfy him respecting the fate of his daughter, and to remove the melancholy impression which appeared to burthen his mind.

"It is a presentiment," observed he, "I shall never again come to the Bois de Boulogne."

Junot had again fallen into a state of melancholy inquietude, from which all my endeavours could not rouse him. His mental dejection manifested itself in a strange way. He used frequently to shed tears. He who had always been so perfectly master of himself would now sometimes weep like a child.

I was at that time *enceinte*. One day, when we were alone together, he said to me in a tone and manner which I shall never forget:

"Laura, if our child should be a boy, promise, swear to me, that you will bring him up to love and fear the Emperor. Promise me that you will spare no pains to inspire him with the same attachment to the Emperor which I cherish—for I still love him!" Here his voice faltered with emotion. "Why do you not reply?" continued he, seeing that I answered only with tears; for I confess, that at that moment, no power on earth could have made me promise what he asked of me, when I saw his fidelity and attachment so ill requited.

"Laura," resumed Junot, "your silence pains

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me more than you can conceive. Do you mean me to understand, my love, that my son, (if it should be a son), will not receive from you the same lessons which I myself would give him?"

"But, my dear Junot, you will give him those lessons yourself."

"I! no—no. That would require me to live for years; and my life is measured only by days."

"And can you wish me to reply to such words as these? Dear Junot, you do not consider that for that man, you are wounding the heart of one who loves you better than all the world. It is unkind to speak to me thus. However, I readily promise that the child shall be brought up as you wish; and when I make a promise, you know I will keep it. But Junot, let me impress upon you that the state of your health requires attention. Do not think of returning to join the army. To remain at home is a duty which you now owe to yourself and your family; and by so doing, you may yourself inculcate in your children those sentiments of attachment which you cherish so unalterably for the Emperor. Do not leave me; do not leave your children and your friends, whom you love, and by whom you are so fondly beloved."

Though I should live for a hundred years to come, other recollections may vanish from my mind, but I shall never forget the glance which Junot then cast upon me. His eyes flashed fire, and his whole frame was convulsed with emotion, as he exclaimed:

"Laura, you do not understand me! How,

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when you know the injuries I have received from that plumed coxcomb,*—when you know all that his vengeance has contrived to ruin me,—you cannot see that I have but one answer to make to all this?

" And what is it ? " enquired I tremblingly; for I was much alarmed by his excited manner.

" To die," answered he. " When I am pierced by a Russian or Austrian sabre, when a Prussian or English cannon ball shall hurl me beneath my horse's feet; then I will ask them with my dying breath whether I want resolution."

That unfortunate phrase of the bulletin was incessantly present in his mind.

In the evening he was more composed. It was always after such storms that he seemed to conclude an armistice with his sufferings. M. de Flahaut and General Valence dined with us that day. After dinner we withdrew to the billiard room; for Junot, who was anxious to divert away his uneasy thoughts, proposed that we should play at billiards.

" I will play against Valence," said he, " and you, Laura, against M. de Flahaut. Valence," he exclaimed, running with the vivacity of a young man to snatch up his queue, " Valence, I will stake twenty-five louis against a hundred bottles of your best Sillery. Will you strike the bargain ?"

" Oh, with all my heart," said Valence, " es-

* He here alluded to the King of Naples.

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pecially if the duchess will join us. But she has not said she will."

"Oh, my wife always does as I wish. Do you not, Laura?" said Junot, who appeared to be in unusually good spirits.

"I can have no objection," replied I, "to be your second in a duel in which the only blood that will be shed is a bottle of champaign. It would be well if all duels ended no worse."

As I finished speaking, Junot stepped up to me and embracing me, whispered in my ear:

"Hear me, Laura,—you are a good player, and I enjoin you now to play your best. I have a thought in my head—a foolish one, perhaps—but no matter." He raised his eyes, and I was struck by their radiant expression. "If I win," continued he, "I shall regard my success as a token of Heaven's will respecting the cause of my sufferings. There stands my brave comrade, (pointing to General Valence.) He knows me; he was beside me when Murat wished to give me orders, though he was not authorised to give me any. And because I did only my duty, he———"

"Yes, yes," said I, anxious to break off the unpleasant train of thought, "he has acted most basely. But come, let us commence our game. Rely on it, I will do my best."

He smiled, and we ranged ourselves in the order of battle.

"But what are Madame d'Abrantes and I to play for?" enquired M. Flahaut.

We had quite forgotten to fix our stake, and in

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truth it was no easy matter to determine on what it was to be; for I made it a rule never to play for money, and as I never drank anything but water, General Valence's stake would have been but little incitement for me to win.

"Well," said I to M. de Flahaut, "if you please, I will play for a bottle,—(mind, it must be as large as these gentlemen's wine bottles,) filled with eau de Portugal instead of champaign. Do you agree to this?"

"Most willingly! and if you should lose, as you are an invalid, I will add to it a bottle of ether."

We laughed, and commenced our game. Junot and I won. He had his hundred bottles of Sillery, and I my eau de Portugal and ether.

"Well, my dear Laura, we have won," said Junot, very joyfully.

I looked at him with surprise, for in general he was very indifferent about either winning or losing.

"Do you know," said he to me, after our friends had taken leave of us, "I had connected in my mind with that game at billiards, a thought which lies very near to my heart. I played it to ascertain whether the Emperor is still attached to me."

On hearing these words uttered by a man who had for months pined in the agony of doubting whether the man for whom he lived, and for whom he died, returned or acknow

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ledged his devotedness;—on hearing Junot avow a weakness which he himself would have laughed at in another, I confess I was moved to tears.

"Well then," said I, embracing him, "you see that he is still attached to you. Make yourself happy then, and let me see you as cheerful as you used to be two years ago."

One or two mornings after this he entered my chamber about nine o'clock. He was pale. His eyes were red and swollen, and he appeared deeply dejected.

"Laura," said he, "I must leave you. I am about to depart. See what a *great favour* the Emperor has conferred on me."

So saying, he threw down upon my bed two brevets, one of which appointed him governor of Venice, and the other, governor-general of the Illyrian provinces.

"Here," continued he, "is the answer which has been returned to the request I addressed to him eight days ago. I asked leave to serve in this new campaign.* I solicited as a favour that he would give me the chance of being killed. That is all I now wish for."

I said everything that appeared to me calculated to console him, and I at length succeeded in convincing him, that the appointments offered to him were really posts of high confidence and importance. The Illyrian provinces were an object of

* The campaign of Dresden was just then about to open.

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envy to Austria; but that motive perhaps the most powerful of all those, which induced the Emperor of Austria to abandon his son-in-law, was not then so obvious as it afterwards appeared. Junot became more calm, and appeared convinced of the reasonableness of what I said. At that moment he was informed that Duroc wished to see him. Our excellent friend, forseeing that the hardest struggle would be at the first moment, had come with the kind intention of saying what he could to calm his irritation. Though I had not risen, I desired that Duroc might be shewn into my chamber. Duroc was in plain clothes, and had just been making a morning round with the Emperor, which he frequently did after his return from Russia.

"If he is anxious for popularity," said the Duke de Frioul, "he has reason to be satisfied.—Our stroll this morning was through the Faubourg Saint-Antoine. I did not myself think that he was so much in favour as he is. You cannot form an idea, Junot, of the enthusiasm of the people.—He stopped before some houses that are being built in the Rue Charonne. His hat was slouched over his forehead, as usual; but in spite of that, it is so easy to recognize him that I am always afraid of something unpleasant occurring in these expeditions, in which I play the Giaffar. This morning we were surrounded by two hundred workmen, who were all labouring with their pick-axes and shovels. The Emperor was as calm as if he had been surrounded by his old guard. While

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he was observing the men at work, he fixed his eyes particularly on one, who moved his arm with difficulty, and appeared to be less active than his comrades."

"It is singular," said the Emperor, "but I think I know that man's face." The workman observing that the *little man* looked at him so steadfastly, looked very hard at him in his turn. The scrutiny was not long, and the workman, who was an old soldier, recognised his general. His pickaxe fell from his hand, and his limbs seemed to tremble under him.

"General!" exclaimed the man in a voice faultering with emotion.

"Well, well! my brave fellow!" said the Emperor, "so you know me, do you?—Pardieu!—and I recollect you.—I said to Duroc, as soon as I saw you:—that is a face I know. Now I recollect you perfectly—you were a corporal in the 32nd, and you were wounded at the bridge of Arcola.—Pardieu!"

To every word uttered by the Emperor, the man replied by bowing his head, and saying: "Yes, General."

"But why have you betaken yourself to this work?" enquired the Emperor. "If you can lift a spade, you can shoulder a musket."

"No," replied the man, with an oath expressive of his vexation; "no,—I cannot carry a musket." And he shewed us the difficulty he had in raising his arm.

"But you were in the guards at Austerlitz,"

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continued the Emperor. "Your name is Bernard, if I mistake not."

"It is, General."

"And why are you not in the Invalids?"

"I am entitled to be there, General,—but...."

"Oh, yes; I remember now what you allude to;" and a cloud gathered on his brow. "Marshal Serrurier did not give me a good report of you.—How happens this? If you entertain opinions unfavourable to the government, you may leave France and go and build houses in America."

"But, General, in that case, I must not only leave my country but you,—whom I love even more than my country."

"Me!" said the Emperor laughing. "Pardieu, this is strange enough. How do you reconcile your attachment to me with your hatred of the empire?"

"Because, General, my attachment is to you personally,—to you alone."

"I am certain," pursued the Duke de Frioul, "that the man had no idea of the force of meaning conveyed in these simple words, *to you alone*, though they evidently came sincerely from his heart. The Emperor felt them, and understood at once the noble mind of the man who uttered them. Even the title of *General*, with which he constantly addressed the Emperor, had its bright side in this little story; for it was not dictated by any feeling of insolence; but was merely the effect of habit in the old soldier.—The Emperor looked at him with some little expression of dissatisfac-

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tion; but more of kindness. The old soldier stood there before him, hat in hand, and with as respectful an air as if he had been under arms on a parade day at the Tuileries."

"*Ah ça !*" exclaimed the Emperor; "Have you not the cross?"

Bernard half opened his jacket and shewed the cross on his bosom. "You see, General, it is in its right place. You gave it me at the battle of Wagram for a ball which the Austrians fired at me.—You were passing at the moment when they were raising me up, and seeing me wounded, like a brave man, you gave me the cross.—It has been a healing plaster to my wound. I never take it from my breast. I sleep with it, and when I come to work I put it within my jacket."

"Why so?" said the Emperor. "Do you think that your work would disgrace the cross? Your labour is honourable, and you should not blush to perform it. What would your comrades think of you? Those comrades to whom you preach republicanism. They must laugh at you, my poor Bernard; for, surely, this is nothing but pride."

Bernard knew not what reply to make. He recollected that some of his comrades had laughed at him, and others had been offended with him. He cast down his eyes.

"Have you not the pension attached to your cross?" resumed the Emperor after a short pause. "I am sorry that the marshal did not ask me what was to be done before he turned you out of the old soldier's retreat.—Was there not some

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other reason besides that which I have just alluded to?—Come, tell the truth."

"To be candid, General, there was another reason. The truth is, I was a little unsteady on the *décadis*. That is to say—I mean, the Sundays —I was punished several times—and then came that affair*. You know what I allude to, General. Well, thought I, since they have turned me out, I must try and get my bread elsewhere, and so I tried my hand at the spade and pickaxe. But still I am sorry at being out of the Invalides; and if you can, General, I wish you would get me sent back again."

He raised his head to look at the Emperor, and his expressive countenance was at that moment irresistibly persuasive; for the big tears which overflowed his eyes ran down a furrow formed by a deep scar in his left cheek. The Emperor made no reply, but stood looking at him for some moments, then turning to me he asked me for my purse, and taking out three napoleons, he presented them to Bernard.

"There is something for you and your comrades to drink my health. Now go to breakfast.—But do not get tipsy, for then I shall be obliged to pay your master for the loss of your day's work—Adieu."

The workmen all threw down their spades shouted "Vive l'Empereur!" and thronged round

* The affair, as he termed it, was that he got tipsy one day and called out "*Vive la République!*"

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Napoleon to kiss his hands. Bernard alone was silent, and he kept back from the rest; but there was more real affection expressed in his silence than in the shouts of his companions, which were raised for a gift of money. The Emperor, stepping up to him, said:—

"Bernard, you must call on General Sougis or Marshal Bessières; or, if you prefer it, come to the castle and ask for this young man, (striking me on the shoulder, said Duroc.) He will have a message for you from me." So saying, he took off his hat, and bad adieu to the workmen, who continued crying: "Vive l'Empereur," long after he was out of sight."

I listened to this story with great interest when Duroc related it to us. As to Duroc, it did not make so great an impression on him; for he witnessed similar occurrences almost every day. However, he agreed with me that this was something out of the common. There was a spice of the ancient Roman in Bernard's character. The Emperor felt this, for he did not converse with him in his character of sovereign. The monarch would have been displeased,—the General not only pardoned, but appreciated the old soldier's greatness of mind. Bernard obtained a situation in the service of the palace, and he soon accustomed himself to say His Majesty, when he spoke of the Emperor. But the drollest part of the story is, that after the restoration of the Bourbons, he became a furious imperialist, and would have knocked any one down who

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should have dared to speak of the Emperor in his hearing without using the title "His Majesty the Emperor and King."

Bernard had been a staunch republican before he entered the guards; but he was sincerely devoted to the Emperor. He had served at the siege of Toulon, and in the campaigns of Italy and Egypt, and he regarded General Bonaparte with a sort of religious veneration. He could imagine nothing more exalted than his title of general, immortalised as it was by so many brilliant victories; but on the establishment of the Empire, when the signatures were being collected, he went to Marshal Davoust, and told him that he would not sign for the Empire. The marshal, or some one who officiated for him, mentioned this to the Emperor. Napoleon, who wished that all the votes should be perfectly free, directed that Bernard should sign as he pleased. He accordingly gave his signature for the negative; but it was accompanied by every good wish for the welfare of his general, and the offer of his blood and his life to serve him. When he was wounded at Wagram, the Emperor, who was always anxious to preserve good soldiers and good Frenchmen, gave him the cross, and ordered that he should be attended to as carefully as if he had been one of the officers of his staff. Napoleon was pleased with the originality of his character. It is astonishing that this man never rose higher than the rank of corporal; for he was clever, and had received some little education. The Emperor forgot

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him for two or three years. Then came the affair of the Invalides, when Bernard had not only spoken with great license, but had several times shouted *vive la république!* In short, General Serrurier had found it necessary to shew him the door.

"The recollection of the siege of Toulon," said the Duke de Frioul, addressing Junot, "reminded the Emperor of you; and I assure you, he spoke of you as the friend he loved best, with Marmont and myself. I affirm this, Junot, on the honour of your old brother in arms."

Junot pressed Duroc's hand, and said:

"Do you swear this?"

"Upon my honour."

"Enough, Duroc. Then I am convinced he is unchanged. I will therefore set off. I will serve him wherever he may desire me to go; and after all, what matters whether my blood be shed in the north or in the south? But I should wish that the Emperor would grant me, as he did when I was in Portugal, the privilege of corresponding with him directly. Do you think he will?"

"I am sure of it."

"How can you be sure of it?"

"Because he told me so."

"Duroc," said Junot, joyfully, "ask him to give me an audience to-morrow morning."

On the following morning Junot saw the Emperor. Napoleon was as kind to him as he could possibly wish. He set off for Illyria, where it was arranged I should join him as

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soon as the state of my health would enable me to undertake the journey. Junot was to go first to Trent, and then to prepare my residence at Venice.*

* Leybach was the chief town of the Illyrian government; but as Junot was at the same time governor of Venice, I chose the latter as my place of residence.

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CHAPTER XXIV.

Enthusiasm of France for the national cause—Marshal Macdonald abandoned—General York—Taurogen—The King of Naples—Prince Eugène—Misunderstanding between Murat and Napoleon—Its cause—Quarrels of the King and Queen of Naples—Murat's demand—Napoleon's decree—Neapolitan Frenchmen—Letters from Napoleon to his sister and Murat—Injudicious articles inserted in the Moniteur—Maria Louisa—Her music and her embroidery—Her indifference to the critical situation of affairs—King Joseph falls back upon France—The battle of Vittoria—Marshal Soult sent to Spain—The battle of Tolosa—General Foy.

FRANCE has been reproached with having abandoned the cause of Napoleon in 1814. Perhaps there really was at that time a depression of spirit, which had its influence on the conduct of the French people. But I can confidently affirm that in the preceding year (1813) the public enthusiasm was admirable, and it reminded me of what I had witnessed when I was a girl, at the commencement of the revolution in 1794 and 1795. The country was once more in danger. Napoleon

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openly proclaimed this, and France heard him. The disasters of the retreat from Russia were frightful; but such was the affection which that man inspired, that the mass of the people breathed not a syllable of reproach. Some few voices might be raised, and occasionally foolish and even clever things might be said; but what of that? France faithfully pursued her glory; and the recollection of twenty years of victory was not to be effaced by a defeat, which might still be excused by the confidence Napoleon reposed in his allies. But he did not seek this justification,—he contented himself with calling his people to arms; and 250,000 men rallied round the national banners whenever the words *foreign invasion* were pronounced.—These words were electrical. Prussia, who was the first, as she ever has been, to give the signal of defection, then perpetrated the odious affair of Taurogen. General York abandoned Marshal Macdonald, who had penetrated victoriously into Samogitria, attacked Livonia, and threatened Riga. He was then constrained to abandon his success, and not only to fall back, but to see his unworthy ally sign a convention with the Russians. Macdonald was obliged to retrograde as far as Lawartz and the Oder, instead of establishing himself in the enemy's territory. But this treachery excited only a louder cry to arms. France became a camp, and every town was an arsenal.

I have already mentioned that the King of Naples departed for his kingdom, consigning to Prince

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Eugene the command of the army which Napoleon had entrusted to him (Murat.) The Emperor had placed a sacred trust in his hands; but he could not appreciate it. He abandoned the precious remains of our brave legions, and cast upon the Viceroy of Italy the whole weight of that responsibility, which Napoleon had given as a mark of preference to one whom he thought the bravest and most worthy. He retired from the danger, in short: for the truth must be told.—He forsook the army at Posen and returned to Naples. I will here relate a few particulars which throw some light on the obscurity of this part of his life.

A rancorous feeling had superseded the sentiments which once united the two brothers-in-law—these sentiments, however had never been of the most cordial description. Napoleon's partiality for Murat was grounded solely on his courage, and the useful account to which it might be turned. I do not say this from my own personal impression; I state the fact from positive information, divested of all partiality. The Emperor did not cherish for Murat the sincere friendship which he entertained for the other officers of the army of Italy. He used frequently to make him a subject of derision; and many of us have heard him laugh at the King of Naples, whom he used to call a *Franconi king*. This unfriendly feeling was of old date, and its cause was well known to his intimate friends.

The circumstance which rendered King Joachim almost inimical to his brother-in-law, had its rise

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in what took place at the time of his expedition against Sicily (1809). Murat saw himself braved by the Anglo-Sicilian fleet,—and with an impulse of courage which was peculiar to him, he exclaimed, *en avant!* without even knowing that he would be followed. He proposed a descent on Sicily. The course was arranged, and one division,—that of General Cavaignac, advanced beyond the light-house. The other divisions did not follow.—Why, I cannot pretend to say. But the King of Naples explained the matter in a way which reflected great blame on his brother-in-law. This expedition failed. He attributed its non-success to the Emperor who, he alleged, had given secret orders. He returned to Naples mortified by his defeat, and with revenge rankling in his heart. From that time ill-feeling was apparent between Murat and Napoleon, and a bitter correspondence was carried on between the court of the Tuileries and that of Naples.

Queen Caroline who had been long carrying on a sort of opposition to her husband, through circumstances of a purely domestic nature, seeing a fair pretext for war, took part against the King; and the palace of Naples presented the scandalous spectacle of a conjugal rupture. These dissensions extended to the individuals of the court. Every trifle afforded the King and Queen a pretext for annoying one another. There was a physician or surgeon named Paborde, who was a great favourite of the King, and was consequently detested by the Queen; Paborde was on the eve of mar-

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riage with a very beautiful young lady (Mademoiselle Saint Meme.) This affair, which nobody would have cared about, if the King and Queen had not meddled with it, became a subject of deadly feud. Joachim, like all hen-pecked husbands declared loudly that he would not be controlled by his wife, and that he would not be a *second Bacciocchi*. He regarded the French army as a sort of auxiliary for seconding the Queen ; the consequence was, that he demanded the recal of the French troops. The Emperor frowned, and answered by a dry negative. Murat then manifested feelings of the most absurd distrust. The Queen and he became implacable enemies, and the interior of the palace of Naples was like the infernal regions. A second demand equally maladroit and ill-timed, completed the misunderstanding between the two crowns. Murat required that all the French in his service should be naturalised as Neapolitans. The thing was ill-judged in every way.

" Ah !" said the Emperor, " then it would appear that our brother no longer regards himself as a Frenchman."

In his indignation at this proposition of Murat, Napoleon immediately issued the following decree, which Joachim did not easily forget :

" Considering that the Kingdom of Naples forms *a portion of the Grand Empire*,—that the prince who reigns in that country, has *risen from the ranks of the French army ;*—that he was raised to the throne *by the efforts* and the blood of French-

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men, Napoleon declares that French citizens are *by right* citizens of the two Sicilies."

I had at that time a great number of friends in Naples, several of whom held appointments at the court. All concurred in assuring me that nothing could be more absurd than the conduct of Murat on this occasion. He sulked like a child, tore off his cross of the legion of honour, and the grand cordons of the order. He repaired to Capodimonte, and there the most disagreeable scenes of altercation ensued between him and the Queen, Murat devoted himself to low private intrigues. He frequently passed a great part of the night in reading police reports, which were the more calculated to alarm him, inasmuch as those who drew them up knew his weak side. To gratify his taste for espionnage, he lost sight of what was due to himself; for he would receive and converse with the lowest and most degraded informers. Still, in spite of all his weakness, Murat had some good points in his character. In 1812, when the drum beat to arms, he seemed anxious that the Emperor should summon him. When the summons was given, though he appeared to hesitate, he was nevertheless resolved. He set off for Russia, but it was with a sore heart; and he manifested his grievances at an ill-chosen moment. As the Emperor said of him, he was always brave on the field of battle; and in the campaign of Russia, he shewed all the valour and determination that man could shew. He gained battles over the Russians, and added to

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the glory of our eagles. In the dreadful retreat from Moscow the Emperor was surrounded by a battalion which might justly have been called his *imperial battalion*. In it, colonels discharged the duty of sub-officers, and generals that of captains and lieutenants. Murat was colonel of this battalion. There was something chivalrous in this body of men, decorated with gold epaulettes, thus constituting themselves the guard of their beloved chief; for such Napoleon was to them at that time, though he thought proper to tell me, in the audience I had with him after his return from Russia, that he experienced nothing but ingratitude.

It has been alleged that when Murat received the command from the Emperor, he consented only to lead the army into the Prussian territory, and that as soon as it should reach Königsberg, he was to return to Naples. Those who knew anything of the Emperor, must be convinced of the inaccuracy of this statement. Is it to be supposed that at a moment when he had serious reason to be displeased with Murat, he would have allowed the latter to dictate terms to him—he, who would never receive a dictation from any of the powers of Europe? The idea is absurd; besides an article in the *Moniteur* of the 8th of February, that is after he learned that Murat had abandoned the command, proves quite the contrary. The following is the article alluded to:

"The King of Naples, being indisposed, has

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been obliged to resign the command of the army, which he has transferred to the Prince Viceroy. The latter is more accustomed to the management of important trusts, and he has the entire confidence of the Emperor."

On the 24th and 26th of the preceding January, Napoleon had written the following letter to his sister Caroline :

" The King of Naples has left the army. Your husband is very brave *on the field of battle ;* but he is weaker than a *woman* or a *monk* when he is not in the presence of the enemy. He has no moral courage."

In February or March following, he wrote to Murat thus :

" I will not say anything here of my dissatisfaction of your conduct since I left the army ; for that is owing to the weakness of your character. You are a good soldier. You fight bravely on the field of battle ; but out of it you have neither character nor energy. However, I presume you are not of the number of those who believe that the lion is dead, and that they may....If you make this calculation, you are completely deceived. You have done me all the harm that you possibly could do since my departure from Wilna. But I will say no more of that. The title of King has turned your head. If you wish to preserve that title, you must look to your conduct."

This letter, which was addressed to Murat in 1813, gave the finishing stroke to his wounded vanity, which had been not a little mortified by

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the article in the Moniteur. He now became the enemy of Napoleon.

I may here observe that it was singularly injudicious in Napoleon to sanction the insertion of offensive personalities in the Moniteur. He perhaps created more enemies by that unfortunate journal than by his cannon. The article on the Queen of Prussia, for example, which was at once false and unjust;—those on the Prince Royal of Sweden, Marshal Stadion, M. de Metternich, etc. together with all that appeared from 1803 to 1814 against the Prince of Wales, afterwards George IV. Truly it is inconceivable, that so great a man as Napoleon should have resorted to such petty means of punishing those who might incur his displeasure.

Meanwhile the clouds gathered more and more thickly, and the storm seemed ready to break. At this critical moment how was Maria Louisa employed?—she who, of all others, might be supposed to tremble when the Austrian cannon was about to roar on the heights of Montmartre!—The Empress employed herself in working embroidery, and playing on the piano. She visited her son, or had him brought to her at certain hours of the day; and the child, who knew his nurse better than his mother, could sometimes with difficulty be prevailed on to hold up his little rosy face to let the Empress kiss him.

Maria Louisa was not a general favourite with the frequenters of the court. This may be easily accounted for. Her associations were restricted

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to her own little interior circle; and the Duchess de Montebello was almost the only individual admitted to her familiarity. This choice was doubtless a good one; but still she might have made herself more agreeable at those little *soirées*, to which only about forty or fifty ladies were admitted. These ladies were alternately invited, so that about ten or twelve were present every evening. They were the *dames du palais*, and the ladies of honour to the imperial princesses.

Spain had felt the counter-stroke of the disasters of the north. King Joseph after having exerted every human effort, was compelled to retire upon France. At this juncture, it was especially requisite that our force in Spain should have been headed by such men as Marshal Soult or Marshal Suchet. But the former was still in Saxony, and the latter was occupied in driving Sir George Murray from Tarragona, who at length fled and left us all his artillery. But what signified this victory? —Jourdan, who commanded King Joseph's army, was unluckily at the head of it at the fatal battle of Vittoria. All was lost — baggage, artillery, every thing fell into the hands of the enemy. The road to France was impracticable; it was necessary to proceed by the way of Pampeluna, and even in that direction, the road was covered with guerrillas. It was there that General Foy with twenty thousand men stopped almost the whole right wing of the English army at the battle of Tolosa in Biscay.

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On hearing of the disastrous battle of Vittoria, the Emperor sent for Marshal Soult.

"You must depart for Spain," said he, "in an hour. All has been lost by the strangest mismanagement. Depart, and serve me—serve your country, as I know you can serve her, and my gratitude will be boundless!"

Marshal Soult departed from Dresden, possessed of no other information than the total destruction of the army of Spain. He arrived on the frontier just as the expiring wrecks of that superb army had touched their native soil. He rallied them, and attacked the enemy at Roncesvalles. The battle was obstinately contested, but what availed even the talent of Soult:—it could not recal the dead to life.

After the battle of Vittoria, the army had ceased to exist. Its miserable remains retired into France, after leaving upwards of eight thousand men among the mountains of Roncesvalles.

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